THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • MONDAY • MARCH 22, 2021 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 32 • LATE CITY EDITION

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AADHAAR VOLUNTARY FOR DIGITAL LIFE CERTIFICATES

Authentication norms relaxed after pensioners complained of unreadable fingerprints and non-availability of Aadhaar cards

CHANGES IN BIOMETRIC ATTENDANCE SYSTEM

With this change, the onus is now on the organisations to offer alternative means for submission of digital Life Certificate under the Jeevan Pramaan scheme. Another notification of March 18 makes Aadhaar authentication voluntary for biometrics attendance systems used in government offices. Here too, offices will have to create alternative system for authentication

SANDES APP TO BE MADE PUBLIC SOON

- Govt has also made Aadhaar optional for users of the National Informatics Centre-developed instant messaging app Sandes
- Developed under Government Instant Messaging System project, Sandes is used by public depts for internal communications
- The app will soon be made available for the general public, too

150+
DEPARTMENTS, INCLUDING NITI AAYOG, INDIAN ARMY, USE SANDES APP

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

THE UPSWING

SECOND WAVE: IT'S HERE AND NOW IN K'TAKA

CM holds high-level emergency meeting; situation to be reviewed again after a week

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE much-feared second wave of Covid-19 has finally begun in Karnataka, Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar declared on Sunday. He also stressed that people need to avoid gatherings, ceremonies, functions, parties and any sort of crowding for the next one or two months in order to prevent any sharp rise in Covid-19 cases.

A late-evening emergency meeting with Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, attended by Health Minister Sudhakar, Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai, Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar, Higher Education Minister C N Ashwath Narayan and Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Jawaid Akhtar, however, took no decision on lockdowns, night curfews or stopping of offline classes in schools and colleges, or any other restrictions. It was agreed to review the situation after a week when a call will be taken on stricter measures that may be implemented.

With the total Covid-19 tally at 9,70,202 cases, the state has lately been seeing a steady increase in the number of active cases (patients currently positive and under treatment) from 8,860 on March 15 to 13,493 cases on Sunday. The recovery rate too has been steadily sliding from 97.78 per cent on March 15 to 97.32 per cent on Sunday.

Bengaluru, which is driving the Covid-19 spike in the state, has been witnessing 1,000-plus additions in new cases on consecutive days with the city tally rising from 4,11,989 on March 15 to 4,17,672 on Sunday. During the same period, the recovery rate has dipped from 97.33 per cent to 96.68 per cent.

CONTINUED ON: P3

VIRUS LOAD RISING

On a day India registered its highest single-day tally this year, the Centre said six states are the worst-hit. A look

43,846 highest single-day spike in India this year

30,535 new cases in M'rashtra, followed by Punjab (2,669)

83.14% cases reported from ● Maharashtra ● Kerala ● Punjab ● Karnataka ● Gujarat ● MP

1,15,99,130 NATIONWIDE TALLY

197 deaths reported in 24 hrs

86.8% deaths from the above six states

38 succumb in Punjab

92 casualties in Maharashtra

B'LURU CASE LOAD
1,039 Test +ve on Sunday
782 Discharged
1 Death

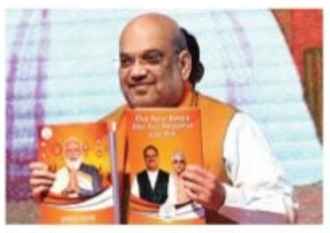
Slew of freebies to woo women in BJP manifesto

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Kolkata

THE BJP on Sunday sought to woo women voters in a big way, by promising 33% reservation in state government jobs, free travel in state-run public transport network and free education from kindergarten right up to the post-graduate level.

The promises were part of its 62-page manifesto released by Union Home Minister Amit Shah here. The document also prioritised the implementation of the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act, saying it will be taken up at the first state cabinet meeting after coming to power. It also promised to give Hindu refugees a financial grant of ₹10,000 per year for the next five years.

"It is not just a manifesto but a resolution letter for West Bengal. It emphasises on women's safety, infrastructure development, better healthcare services and setting up industries in the state. The core idea is to build a Sonar Bangla," said Amit Shah.



Amit Shah releasing the BJP manifesto, at Kolkata on Sunday | BIBHASH LODH

The manifesto promises to give ₹18,000 to each of 78 lakh farmers in Bengal in one go under the Centre's PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme. "The Bengal government deprived the farmers from getting annual grant of ₹6,000 for the past three years. After coming to power in Bengal, we will transfer the due amount of ₹18,000 in one go. Besides, the annual financial assistance will be increased to ₹10,000 from ₹6,000. Landless farmers will also be given ₹4,000 annual assistance," said Shah.

Eying fishermen, who form a considerable chunk of the electorate in East Midnapore, South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas districts, the manifesto promised a scheme to give ₹6,000 per year to each fisher family. Shah also announced that if the party wrests power, three AIIMS will be set up in north Bengal, Junglemahal and Sunderabans.

Shah announced a special investigation team will be set up to probe all political killings, adding victim families will get ₹25 lakh relief irrespective of political allegiance. P7

Ashoka varsity admits to lapses

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

Days after the resignation of political commentator Pratap Bhanu Mehta and economist Arvind Subramanian from Ashoka University, the institution admitted to lapses in its processes on Sunday. Its chancellor said the university remained committed to academic freedom and its board head promised an open line of communication.

No interference in academic freedom: Chancellor

In his separate letter, chancellor Rudrangshu Mukherjee wrote, "the founders have never interfered with academic freedom: faculty members have been left free to construct their own courses, follow their own methods of teaching and own methods of assessment."

As for Mehta, he wrote to the students urging them to not press for his return, pointing out that the circumstances that led to his resignation will not change in the foreseeable future.

Mehta recently stepped down as professor saying the founders made it clear that his association with the institution was a 'political liability'. Subramanian resigned two days later. "We acknowledge that there have been some lapses in institutional processes which we will work to rectify in consultation with all stakeholders. This will reaffirm our commitment to academic autonomy and freedom which have always been at the core of the Ashoka University ideals," the institution said in a statement that was jointly issued by the university chancellor, vice-chancellor and the chairman of Board of Trustees, along with Mehta and Subramanian. P7

After Mansukh Hiren's wife alleged that Waze was involved in her husband's death, we decided to investigate it thoroughly

Sharad Pawar, NCP chief

Call on Deshmukh today, says Pawar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Mumbai

A day after shunted out Mumbai police commissioner Parambir Singh outed Home Minister Anil Deshmukh's extortion racket, an embarrassed NCP chief Sharad Pawar on Sunday admitted that the charges were very serious and required an in-depth probe.

With Deshmukh's future hanging by a thread, Pawar said the call will be taken by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray by Monday. Despite growing calls for his resignation, the NCP ruled it out.Pawar also tried to limit damage, since Deshmukh belongs to his party, by suggesting that a probe into the charges be conducted by supercop Julio Ribeiro. But Ribeiro rejected it, saying at 92 he was in no position to initiate a probe and in any case, it was the NCP founder who was the best person to do it.

"The probe must be done by Sharad Pawar himself. He is the head of the party. They themselves know everything and they should take action. They will have to do it now because people are fed up with all this," said Ribeiro, who has served as the Mumbai Police commissioner and the DGP of Punjab and Gujarat.

Saturday's letter bomb by Singh had accused Deshmukh of directing assistant police inspector Sachin Waze, who is at present in NIA's custody, to run an extortion racket to raise ₹100 crore per month.

Trying to deflect criticism from Thackeray and Deshmukh, Pawar claimed sought to blame Waze's reinstatement on Singh. "It was Singh who assigned sensitive cases to Waze. After Mansukh Hiren's wife alleged that Waze was involved in her husband's death, we decided to investigate it thoroughly," he claimed. It was only after Singh was transferred that he made the allegations, said Pawar. P7

12 SC 'informant' families face boycott over 2 years

SUBHASH CHANDRA N S @ Karwar

FOR almost two years now, 12 families of Yennemadi near Hirregutti village in Kumta taluk, belonging to the Scheduled Caste, have been facing social boycott — shockingly by their own community. Their crime: they are accused of informing the Forest Department officials about a few wildlife poaching incidents in which local villagers were involved.

My own community members even directed others not to give us any food or water, or even interact with us

Manjunath Haller, Yennemadi resident

Manjunath Haller, who has been the prime target of the villagers, said, "Sometime in 2019, some people had poached a sambar deer. This was followed by a few more cases of wild animals being poached. The culprits were later nabbed by the Forest Department. Following this, there was a debate in the village about who had informed the officials. I was targeted without even being given a chance to speak, and banished from the community," he bemoaned. "My own community members even directed others not to give us any food or water, or even interact with us," he added.

CONTINUED ON: P5

EXPRESS READ

India win both men's, women's 10m air pistol team gold medals

New Delhi: A dominant India claimed both the gold medals on offer by some distance in the men's and women's 10m air pistol team events on the third competition day of the ISSF World Cup here on Sunday.

'India's military 4th strongest'

New Delhi: China has the strongest military force in the world, while India stands fourth, according to a study by defence website Military Direct. The US, despite its big military budget, comes in at second, followed by Russia.

Future moves HC division bench

New Delhi: Future Group moved the division bench of the Delhi HC against an order passed by the single-member bench, which has directed to stay its ₹24,713 crore deal with Reliance to sell its retail and wholesale business.

WITH THIS ISSUE
THE ESSENTIAL CAMPUS DIGEST edex YOUR LIFE COACH
32 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF edex (TABLOID) AND 4 OF CITY EXPRESS

CM GYAAN

Blame self for few kids, less ration: Rawat

VINEET UPADHYAY @ Dehradun

NEW Uttarakhand Chief Minister Tirath Singh Rawat's foot-in-the-mouth moments continued to grow on Sunday, as he berated jealous people with planned families for taking home lesser free ration.

"Now brother, who is to blame for this? He produced 20 (children) and you produced only two. So he gets a quintal of ration. When there was time, you produced only two and not 20. Now why this jealousy?" the CM reasoned while dwelling on the ration scheme in his speech in Nainital to mark the World Forestry Day.

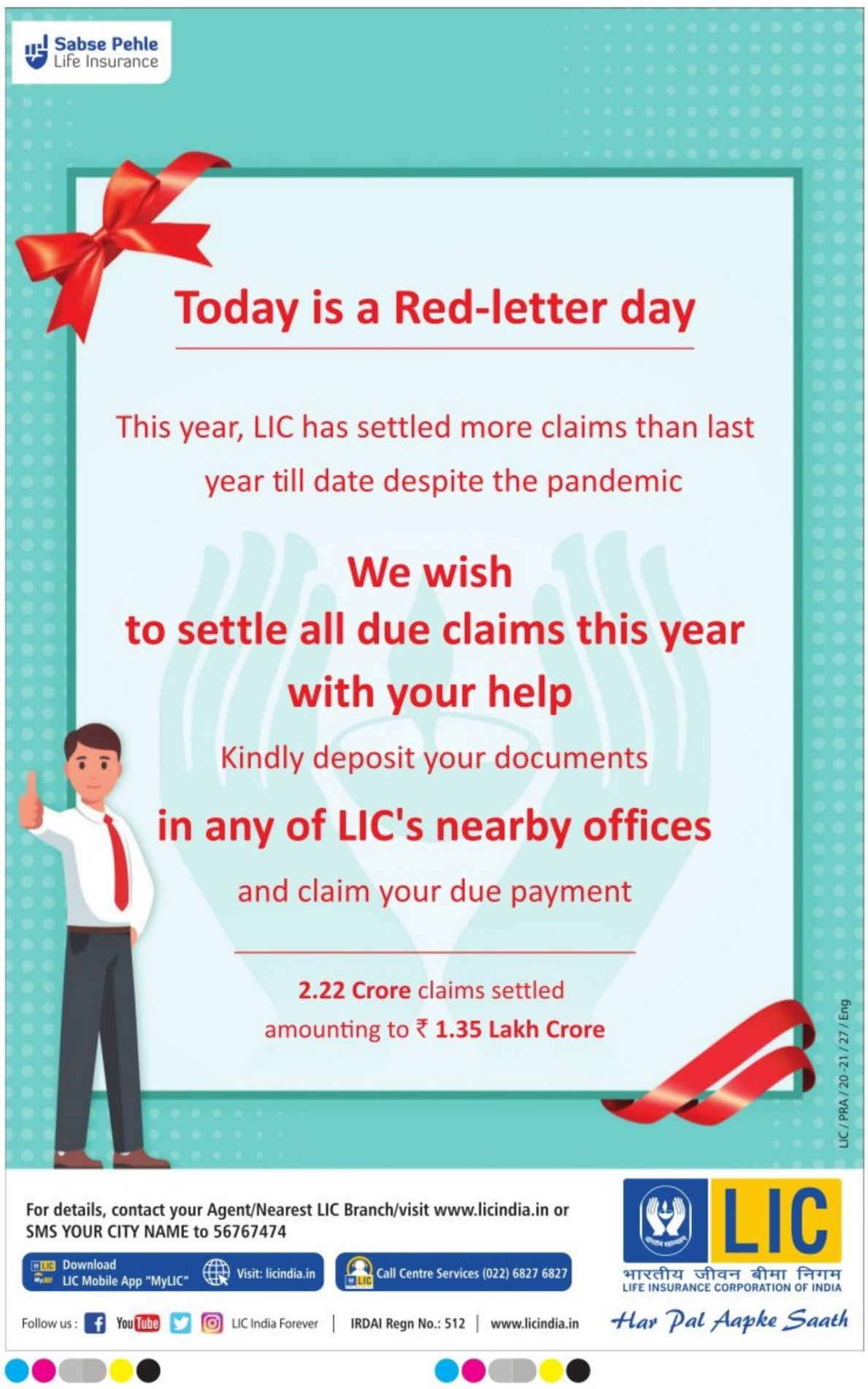
He said the government provided 5 kg of high quality rice per person and those with 20 in the family took home 100 kg during the pandemic.

Rawat also erroneously blamed the US, instead of the UK, for 200 years of rule in India. "America, which enslaved us for 200 years and ruled the whole world, it is struggling at present to manage Covid," was his second nugget.

By his count, the Covid mortality figure in the US currently stands at 50 lakh, while the actual toll is 5.4 lakh.

Ripped jeans

Last week, Rawat had criticised women wearing ripped jeans, wondering what values they would impart to children. A huge backlash later forced him to apologise


Sabse Pehle
Life Insurance
Today is a Red-letter day
This year, LIC has settled more claims than last year till date despite the pandemic
We wish
to settle all due claims this year
with your help
Kindly deposit your documents
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2.22 Crore claims settled
amounting to ₹ 1.35 Lakh Crore
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Har Pal Aapke Saath

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU

ALMANAC TODAY
• Monday: 22/03/2021 • Year: Sarvari • Ayana: Uttharayana
• Ritu: Sishira • Masa: Phalguna • Paksha: Shukla • Tithi: Navami 5:14 am
• Nakshatra: Ardra 5:10 pm • Moon in Kataka Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
• Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER
MIN 18°C | MAX 34°C
FORECAST Sunny

Sunrise 6.22 am
Sunset 6.30 pm
Moonrise 1.02 am
Moonset 12.37 pm

02 BENGALURU MONDAY 22.03.2021 newindianexpress.com

Summer camps keep online options open

Still uncertain over duration of vacation

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA
@Bengaluru

Summer schools are set to welcome students after a break of one year. But with uncertainty about the duration of the vacation and the continuation of offline interaction, they too are gearing up, although hesitantly, to online practices.

Last year, the lack of a proper academic calendar prevented many from rolling out their camps to students. Summer camp organisers told *TNIE* that they had to resort to online classes, despite the need for physical interaction which play a role in social skill development apart from motor and creative skills.

Vijaya Jaju, who started online art classes pro bono on Facebook Live during the pandemic and organises summer camps, emphasised that while activities like story-telling and interpretation can be taken online, art and craft is more hands-on. But the trend of online classes is likely to stay for at least the next six months, considering the current situation, he said.

Latha Gangadharan, founder, The Alternative Learning Community, said that the last year since their alternative school had already started online classes, they continued summer school for their own students. This year, however, they are hoping the situation gets alright and are planning to roll out the summer school in a physical space for a small group of students.

The summer school, she said, is an emotional quotient-based learning. "This year in addition to carpentry, block printing and setting up of kitchen garden, we are also introducing Playback Theatre and kickboxing. Kickboxing helps vent out their pent-up anxiety through a legitimate way and gets the positivity in," she added.

Deepa Naidu, Founder of BetterMe, an international hybrid schooling system also providing unique skills training through summer camps, said last year, schools started in April itself and summer school was impossible.

"We still managed to host an international cooking competition where students sent in untinkered videos of their cooking a dish," she said.

Leveraging on the online competition from last year, Deepa said they have planned to host more competitions in addition to the classes that students take at summer school. "This way, they have an exposure to a wider competition and internationally," she said.

A file picture of kids learning swimming at a summer camp in Ulsoor | EXPRESS

A WELCOME BREAK

A crow quenches its thirst in a puddle formed near a sprinkler at Cubbon Park on Sunday. As the mercury starts rising, water sprinklers at parks have come as a blessing for the winged creatures | MEGHANA SASTRY

BDA HITS JACKPOT WITH E-AUCTION OF CORNER SITES

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

THE e-auctioning of corner sites by the Bengaluru Development Authority has raised much-needed financial resources for the cash-strapped organisation. As of March 11, a total of 1,566 sites were auctioned in six rounds and the returns have been impressive, with a site in HSR Layout raking in a record ₹8.09 crore.

A senior BDA official said, "We earned revenue of ₹1,412 crore from auctioning of corner sites. Barring 135 sites, for which we rejected the bids as they were low, the rest have exceeded our expectations."

Corner sites are valued much higher than regular Bengaluru Development Authority sites due to their accessibility, good ventilation and natural lighting and fetch the BDA 25 per cent more returns.

The official said, "The Bengaluru Development Authority plans to e-auction 2,500 sites in total. We expected to earn ₹906 crore from the 1,566 sites which went under the hammer.

The overall amount we got is over ₹500 crore. The process of collection of payments is on and ₹ 200 crore is yet to be collected. This has given us the much-needed funding."

Though many sites went above the bid price, a site at HSR Layout Sector-2, measuring 206.9 sqmt (over 40x60 sq ft), fetched us 1.6 times (160 per cent) the floor price. "We were looking at ₹3.1 crore and we got 8.09 crore.

The final amount works out to ₹3,91,000 per sqmt while we had only estimated ₹1,50,000 per sqmt," the official explained.

The other areas where the sites were auctioned were Anjanapura, Banashankari 6th Stage, BTM Layout 4th and 5th Stages, East of NGEF, Sir M Visvesvaraya Layout, Jnana Bharathi and Rajajinagar. Bids for 135 sites were rejected as they were 5 per cent lesser that the base price.

"They will also be re-auctioned," the official said.

K'taka logs 6 lakh free eSanjeevani health consultations

RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

SINCE its launch in December 2019 in Karnataka, eSanjeevani, the flagship telemedicine consultation project of the Government of India, has completed six lakh free online consultations, as of March 15.

Developed by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in Mohali, the app, available on Google Play Store, was launched to provide free OPD consultations to people even in remote areas, on a hub-and-spoke model, without them having to incur any out-of-pocket expenditure.

The person can either login to the app on their own at home or visit a PHC where the doctors can login to consult specialists in district hospitals or super-speciality hospitals in Bengaluru for expert advice.

"There are 38 hub centres, including super-speciality hospitals like Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases and more, as well as 2,500 spoke centres, including primary health centres and health and wellness centres," said Dr Vasanth Kumar, Assistant Deputy Director, e-health, Health and Family Welfare Department.

Specialists in Cardiology, ENT, Ophthalmology, Psychiatry, Neurology, Paediatrics and other specialisations are available for telemedicine consultation and they can upload prescriptions as well. The patient, at their end, can also scan and upload documents like ECG reports, apart from manually entering their symptoms and medical history.

"If a daily-wage labourer is ill, he will lose the day's wages if he takes the day off to go to the nearby PHC. If he goes to the PHC and the doctor or nurse is not available, they will have to spend on ticket fare to go to the district hospital. With eSanjeevani, he/she can avoid these issues and get medical consultation at home," Dr Kumar added.

At least 30% of the sub-centres in the state are covered under this programme and 3,000 more will be added by this month. In the 2020-2021 budget, ₹19 crore was allocated for developing telemedicine at PHCs and wellness centres. Owing to Covid, this was kept on hold but officials are now preparing the file, to send it for approval. The funds will be used to purchase Information and Computer Technology (ICT) equipment such as computers, web cams, headphones, etc., and also recruit human resources.

St John's to upgrade its health centre to 100-bed facility

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA
@Bengaluru

ST John's Medical College is set to start a 100-bed primary and secondary healthcare centre at Kaggalipura, on Kanakapura Road about 24 km from the parent hospital in Koramangala.

This is to spread the expertise of the hospital and affordable healthcare to patients beyond the hospital to the periphery, who would otherwise be forced to travel for treatment. This not-for-profit initiative will be in collaboration with the Brigade Group of builders. An ambulance service will be available at the centre, for those who require further treatment, dean of St. John's Medical College, Dr George A D'Souza told *TNIE*.

The medical college has already started started a primary health clinic in Kagalipura in June 2020. The health centre would be a step ahead, he added. At present, the clinic treat about 40 patients a day. At the centre, patients would get consultancy from established health professional who also work at the hospital, at a nominal fee of ₹75.

The existing health centre at Kagalipura works complementing the local primary health centre. The same was seen during vaccination drives, where the health centre helped with the medical personnel. "There has been a demand for Dermatologists and Orthopaedics in the area, which the hospital can fill in," he said.

The health clinic started with visits from specialists once a month, but with the demand, the visits have increased to two, says Dr D'Souza. The hospital also has requests to run a facility for autistic children in the city.

> **Doctors who work at the hospital, in their spare time, will work at the centre. The medicines would be low cost and generic medicines will be encouraged**
>
> Dr George A D'Souza, dean of St John's Medical College

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

22nd March: The current Solar alignments are excellent for all inventive and independent-minded people, so if you are one of those who wants to go your own way, but wishes to avoid confrontation with others, then you're in with an extra chance today. Map out a careful strategy and you could do very well indeed.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
Today's Moon denotes a fairly enjoyable time till you have a thick enough skin. Friction will develop if there is a big gulf between what you want to do and what you have to do. Don't take others' complaints too seriously - not until they show good grounds for feeling aggrieved.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 - May 21)
A day of domestic responsibility suits your emotional needs. One important fact when it comes to getting the best out of partners: others will appreciate you much more if you praise what is best in their behaviour, rather than criticising what is worst.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Travel plans could be looming, but that doesn't mean that you will be on the move. It could be that others are coming to you, or that communication will be on the phone. Try to cultivate a global perspective, keeping at least half an eye on the big picture.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
A simple reading of your chart is that it's a fine moment for dealing with financial matters, like picking up good bargains. A deeper interpretation is that it's time to get to grips with feelings of emotional insecurity - and work out where your doubts come from.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23)
The Moon plays a special role today, and in any circumstances that is an indication that you hold the key to all emotional relationships and developments. Use your power wisely, and never ignore your responsibilities. It's the least that other people expect!

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
The whole of the week is coloured by romantic and social enthusiasm. Though today's stars are slightly on the shy side, do yourself a favour and organise friendly gatherings for later. Also, be sensitive to other people's doubts, otherwise you will store up trouble for the future.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
It's precisely because social influences are quite strong that even at work co-operation and teamwork are absolutely essential. Don't try and go it alone, however secret and intense your real feelings may be. Look for support wherever and whenever you can find it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
You may devote as much time as is necessary to your professional aspirations, or to community affairs, both of which must be designed to enhance your reputation amongst your peers. Plus, troublesome financial matters may be deferred without too many worries.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
Unusual personal planetary patterns may be seen as good, because they make you confident and self-motivated, but difficult because you may resent partners' and colleagues' attempts to control your life. It's all a matter of striking the right balance.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
The developing romantic challenge between Venus and Jupiter is already stirring your emotions, producing new feelings of desire. It's also encouraging you to reflect on the past. Just how this works out in real life will be clear by the end of the week.

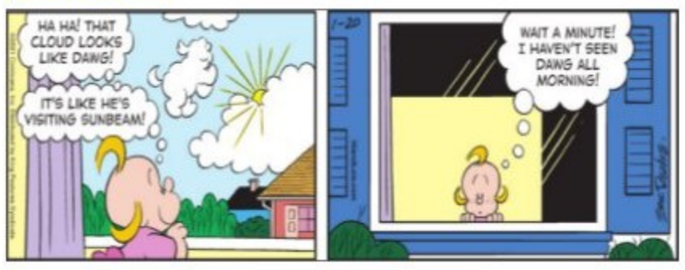
AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
Serious Saturn and energetic Mars are still playing their part, bringing the need for discipline and hard work, but to a lesser extent than over the past few weeks. The tendency is towards extravagance, some of which will be your own choice, some other people's.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
The overall presence of certain planets over your sign is more languid at the moment than in the recent past, which means that you may be able to take life one step at a time, dealing with this point now, that one then, depending on your changing moods.

THE PHANTOM

... AROUND THAT CORNER YOU'LL SEE THE CENTRAL GUARD STATION TO YOUR LEFT.... ANYBODY THERE WILL KNOW WHERE THEY'RE HOLDING YOUR FRIEND.
HA! IT WILL BE A SUPERB ACTION, MISTER TOWNS!
MY LUCHA LIBRE WILL ENCOURAGE THE RELEASE OF MUCH INFORMATION!

HI AND LOIS



BEETLE BAILEY

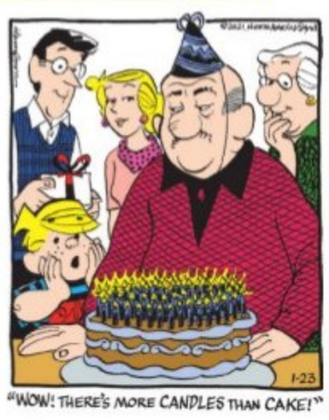
BLONDIE

AN EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT?
CAN'T A HUSBAND SURPRISE THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE SOMETIMES?
OH, MISTLETOE! HOW ROMANTIC!
HEE HEE! WE'D BETTER TRY IT OUT TO MAKE SURE IT WORKS
I WONDER WHAT HE'S AFRAID TO TELL ME ABOUT
WELL, I GUESS IT'S SAFE TO TELL HER ABOUT THE CARD GAME NOW!

LOCKHORNS

"YES, IT HAD A TRAGIC ENDING... I PROBABLY MISSED MOST OF THE JETS GAME."

DENNIS THE MENACE



"WOW! THERE'S MORE CANDLES THAN CAKE!"

SUDOKU

HARD: Test your number crunching skill with our unique puzzle

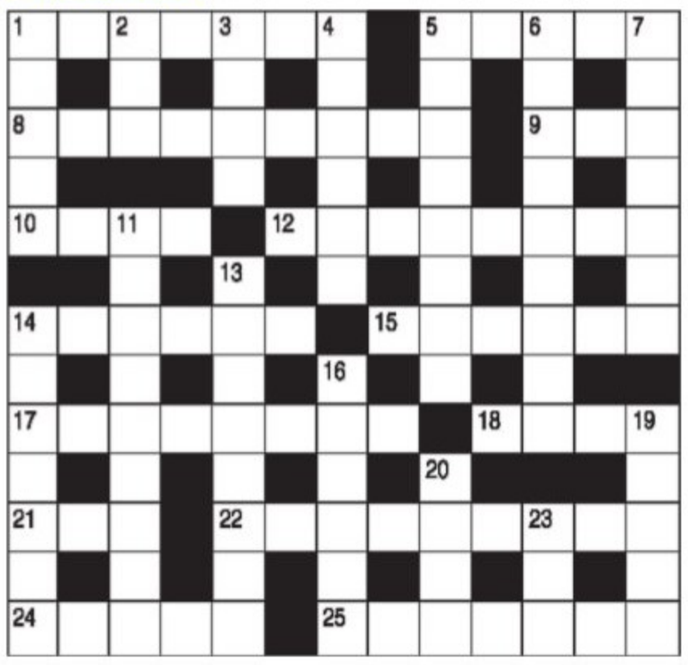
Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3X3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

6			5					7
				2		4		
	5	4						
8	2	3			1		6	
9			8		3			5
	7		9			1	3	8
						7	9	
		6		8				
3					6			1

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

6	3	4	1	8	9	5	2	7
9	1	5	3	2	7	4	6	8
7	8	2	4	5	6	3	9	1
8	7	6	5	9	3	2	1	4
2	4	9	8	7	1	6	5	3
1	5	3	6	4	2	8	7	9
5	2	1	7	3	4	9	8	6
3	9	7	2	6	8	1	4	5
4	6	8	9	1	5	7	3	2

CROSS WORD



ACROSS

1 Having no right to souvenir, might become jealous (7)
5 Where the retired gardener may be found working? (2,3)
8 Gave up and left (9)
9 Send a Morse message or intercept one (3)
10 Not a big row though it turns very noisy (4)
12 Goes or returns (8)
14 A bit of a rocket in pearls or horses (6)
15 Had a picnic? (3,3)
17 Watchman who sticks to the rules? (8)
18 A return of fliers from some distance away (4)
21 It is engaged in making a machine work (3)
22 Men of the same calling (9)
24 It's used for turning a French article to an English one (5)
25 One is seen in exchanges of invective (7)

DOWN

1 Force out an obsolete law (5)
2 By way of a Roman road (3)
3 Strangely these can be even in the plural (4)
4 Southeastern woman married to a Spaniard (6)
5 I acted in variety show (8)
6 How sea sick people feel on disembarking? (6,3)
7 Security is lifted in the store (7)
11 A marksman will find use for this sort of gift horse (9)
13 Recent disturbance about an actor's appearance (8)
14 It's coal maybe but quite indifferent (7)
16 He alone is happy (6)
19 They may spray or be sprayed (5)
20 It's sure to upset an employer (4)
23 Deceive a child (3)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

Across: 1 Languish, 5 Pass, 9 Skull, 10 Rancour, 11 Practitioner, 13 Polish, 14 Script, 17 Cartographer, 20 Figment, 21 Inapt, 22 Cite, 23 Defender.

Down: 1 Lost, 2 Neutral, 3 Ugly customer, 4 Strain, 6 Acorn, 7 Sorority, 8 Indiscipline, 12 Specific, 15 Ireland, 16 Writhe, 18 Right, 19 Star.

JUMBLE

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

BLAEC
UAGGE
PESEYL
NYILAM

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

May we purchase one of your books?
Of course!
Do you have every word in here?
WHEN ASKED IF HIS NEW DICTIONARY COULD BE PURCHASED, NOAH WEBSTER SAID ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon

Print Your answer here: " " " "

ANSWERS TOMORROW

SATURDAY'S: **Jumbles:** GAMUT MERGE EITHER KNOTTY
ANSWER: They loved baking Christmas cookies together and were enjoy all the – MERRYMAKING

Without curbs, tough to control pandemic: Panel

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

MINISTER Sudhakar, while speaking to *TNIE*, on Friday, had warned that the government may be forced to implement night curfew if daily addition in cases rise and had expressed concern that it will be impossible to control the pandemic without imposing curbs. "There is a fast-changing trend of Covid cases rising in Bengaluru and in some pockets of Karnataka," he had said.

On Sunday, he said he will request Chief Minister Yediyurappa to convene an all-party meeting to discuss containment measures. "The bypolls are coming up, but corona will not spare political parties. People should know how to protect themselves. The government can only vaccinate people and offer treatment for Covid," Sudhakar said.

The Technical Advisory Committee has stated that without curbs on activities, it will be difficult to control the pandemic.

At a meeting earlier in the day between Home Minister Bommai, Sudhakar and CM Yediyurappa, it was decided that districts bordering other states with rising Covid cases have to keep stricter checks on people entering the state and ensure they have the negative RT-PCR reports. At least eight border districts have been ordered to conduct on-the-spot tests if those entering do not have Covid-negative reports with them.

"Regarding reopening of schools and colleges, the Health Department will advise the CM," Sudhakar added.

GETTING PREPARED

Plasma therapy to play role in second wave: Doc

Treatment recommenced due to spike in cases over last few days

RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

HCG Hospital — the first healthcare facility in the state to provide convalescent plasma therapy for Covid patients last year — has recommenced the treatment as there has been a spike in cases over the last few days.

Last year, when cases were increasing, HCG stared plasma therapy under the guidance of Dr Vishal Rao. It gradually petered out as cases reduced in December and requests for plasma donations stopped coming from January this year. But with the second wave on in the state, the hospital has started receiving 4-5 requests per day and it has decided to restart the treatment.

Dr Rao, chief of Head and Neck Surgical Oncology and Robotic Surgery at HCG Cancer Centre, who headed the plasma therapy clinical trials in the state, said that during the peak of the first wave around September, there were 800 ICU cases per day. But now, it is only around 130.

"During the second wave, the burden will be more on ICUs because of virus mutations. Plasma therapy will come into use again, as mass Covid vaccinations could take about two years, going by the current pace," he told *TNIE*.

A health worker clad in PPE kit collects swab samples of passengers at the KSR railway station in Bengaluru from on Sunday | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

He said around 1,200 people were administered plasma in the state, of which, nearly 60 per cent of critical and severely-ill patients recovered.

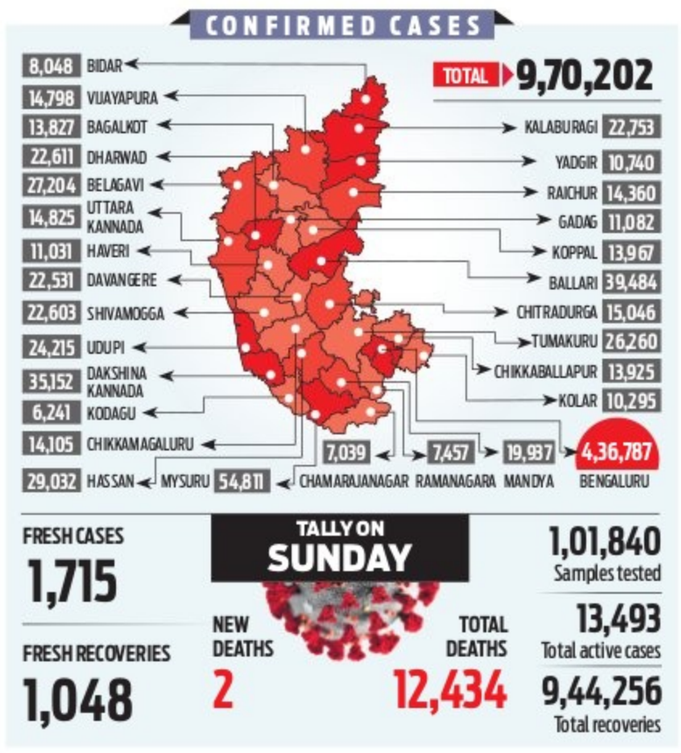
"The remaining did not make it. One of the reasons was that the plasma would be administered late. For example, a person gets a fever, turns breathless a week later, is put on a ventilator the week after that. Other methods are tried, and only when they do not work, plasma is used. In this case, the plasma will not work as the cytokine storm has already caused the damage which is irreversible," Dr Rao explained.

There were two important learnings from plasma therapy last year. One, to check if the donor has high antibodies before donating plasma, and the other, giving plasma early when the patient is breathless and not wait till the situation deteriorates.

Plasma therapy should be given when the patients are moderate-to-severely ill, and not when they are critical.

On ICMR's phase-3 plasma trials data, which stated that plasma therapy did not help, Dr Rao said the biggest critique of their study was that they did not check antibody levels of the donor and that their donors were all asymptomatic patients.

He also said that plasma therapy worked in Karnataka as vitros antibody assay was carried out to check antibody levels, before taking plasma from the donor.



CONTAINMENT ZONES RISE TO 15 IN CITY

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

AS Covid cases continue to rise in the city and state — crossing 1,000 every day — cluster cases being reported in Bengaluru are also increasing. On a day when the state reported 1,715 cases, with 1,039 from Bengaluru, containment zones in the capital rose to 15.

As per the BBMP war room data, there are five containment areas in Yelahanka zone, one in South zone, three in West zone, four in Dasarahalli, and two in East zone presently.

The total positive cases in the state were 9,70,202 on Sunday. The positivity rate is at 4.75 per cent and that of Bengaluru is 1.52 per cent.

Two Covid deaths on Sunday took the toll in the state to 12,434 cases. The mortality rate is at 1.28 per cent.

Health Minister Sudhakar on Sunday said people's cooperation is crucial to manage the second Covid wave. "If people do not follow precautions, it will spread further. All senior citizens and those eligible should get vaccinated. The government is doing whatever it can. Strict restrictions are being avoided to ensure that there is no inconvenience for day-to-day activities of people and economy," Sudhakar said.

So far, 3,17,546 healthcare workers and 51,402 frontline workers have received the second dose of Covid vaccine. Among the general public, 2,86,014 people between the age of 45 and 60 with comorbidities and 10,90,977 people aged above 60 years have received the first dose of the vaccine.

Poor non-Covid patients have no access to govt healthcare: Docs

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE resident doctors' association of Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI) on Sunday issued a statement noting that the poor were unable to access tertiary care for non-Covid treatment in Bengaluru, as the government has converted speciality government hospitals into exclusive centres for Covid-19 treatment.

The move has forced the poor non-Covid patients to avail treatment in private hospitals at unaffordable cost, they stated while advocating that separate Covid care centres be set up with beds, oxygen, ventilators and healthcare professionals.

"The best tertiary care centres like Victoria and Bowring hospitals were robbed from their capacities to provide speciality care to poor non-Covid patients," they wrote, adding that even after three months had passed this year, no decision was taken on shifting Covid patients elsewhere, while also leading to wastage of hospital resources and skills of specialist doctors.

A file picture of BMCRI

The best tertiary care centres like Victoria and Bowring hospitals were robbed from their capacities to provide speciality care to poor non-Covid patients

Resident doctors' association of BMCRI

They also stated that non-Covid patients who come to these two hospitals have modest monthly incomes, and considering the lockdowns, some were even out of jobs, making private healthcare beyond their reach. They questioned the government on the measures being taken to build or strengthen Covid Care Centres with necessary equipment or the required number of health workers in the last one year.

The government's plan is still to admit all Covid patients in tertiary care centres like Victoria and Bowring hospitals, they wrote, in the light of the second Covid wave having begun in Karnataka.

In 2019, Victoria Hospital treated around 70,000 out-patients and around 4,000 in-patients every month. Approximately, 1,500 major operations and 3,000 minor operations are successfully performed here every month, which constitutes to around 3,000 out-patients per day, and approximately 8,40,000 out-patients per year. Around 70,000 non-Covid patients per month can be treated at Victoria and Bowring hospitals, they said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, the Petitioners by name Manjula & another filed a Petition to obtain the Death Certificate of the 1st Petitioner's Father-in-Law and the 2nd Petitioner's Father by name Nagappa, S/o. Abbaiah as he died on 10-12-1992 at # 353, 5th Main, 2nd Block, 3rd Stage, Near Carmel School, Bovi Colony, Basaveshwara Nagar, Bangalore - 560 079, against BBMP, Bengaluru, Under C.Misc. No. 1469/2021 at Vth ACMM at Bengaluru, the case is posted **on 23.3.2021 at 11 a.m.** any interested person may file on objection on the said date.

Advocate for Petitioner : **PANKAJA B.C.,** Advocate, # 239, 12th Block, Nagarabhavi, Bengaluru - 560 072.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public that the original registered Sale Deed document bearing **No.09113/2004-05, dated: 12.08.2004** registered in the **office of the Sub Registrar Anekal Taluk** of property bearing residential converted Site No.186, bearing Panchayath Khatha No. 2390, Sy.No. 21/1 of IGGALURU Village, Attibele Hobli/Madivala Village, Kasaba Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore, which is executed in the favour of **Rajat Aggarwal S/o. Ashok Aggarwal**, has been lost, the person/s who ever finds or is in possession of the above mentioned original document is/are requested to return back to the nearest police station or may contact below mentioned number.

Mobile No: 9972498616
Name: MADHUKUMAR. J

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby put to notice that my client has entered into an agreement of sale for the purchase of the Schedule Property from its owners namely **Sri. T.S.Shylasree,** W/o Avanish P Saklani and Sri.Avanish P Saklani, S/o. Sri.Parmesh M Saklani, residing at No.34-04, Octavius, Hiranandani gardens, Powai IIT, Mumbai-400076, Maharashtra.

Any person having any manner of claim, right, title and interest over the Schedule Property are hereby notified to register their claims with copies of documents to the undersigned, within **10 days** from this date of Public Notice. If no claims or objections are registered, my client shall proceed and complete the sale transaction to purchase the Schedule Property, deemed to be free from all encumbrances. Any claims received beyond **10 days** will not be considered.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing vacant Site No.L-113, BBMP Khatha No.703/L-113, situated at Sector-VI (Agara), Hosur Sarjapura Road Layout (known as H.S.R.Layout) Bangalore, measuring East to West 24.84 meters and North to South 15.23 meters., totally admeasuring 378.31 Sq. Mtrs. and bounded on:-

East by : Property bearing No: L-124;
West by : 40 Feet Road;
North by : Property bearing No: L-114;
South by : Property bearing No: L-112;

G.V. Sudhakar, Advocate
No.3, 4, 5 & 8, First Floor, Abhayashrama Complex, 4th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bangalore-27.
Ph : 080-42194390, 9886359644

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Client **SMT. NIRMALA,** aged about 43 years, W/o Nataraj .M.G Residing at : No.No.78(V), 4th Cross, Pai Layout, Opp Food World Godown, Hulimavu B.G.Road, Bangalore-560076 wish to purchase agricultural land bearing Old Sy No.88 New Sy No.88/1, measuring 20 Guntas situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District from its owner **SRI. C.R. GOPI,** aged about 38 years, S/o Sri.P.Rangaswamy, Residing at : Near Sri Rama Devasthana, Bagaluru Road, Sarjapura village, Sarjapur Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore who has a clear and marketable title to the Schedule Property.

Any person/s who claims any right, title or mortgage or charge or interest of any nature in relation to the Schedule property and/or has objections of any nature to the proposed transaction should lodge such claims and/or objections in writing to the undersigned together with supporting documents within 7 (Seven) days from the date of this notice, failing which it will be deemed that no valid claims or objections subsist and our client would proceed to complete the transaction with the present owner by entering into sale deed in their name subject to compliance with other statutory and legal formalities.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the agricultural land bearing Old Sy No.88 New Sy No.88/1, measuring 20 Guntas situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the:

East : Property belongs to Gopalreddy,
West : Property belongs to Lagumaiah,
North : Property belongs to Pillaiah and Chikkaramareddy,
South : Property belongs to Kondareddy.

R.SURENDRA NATH BENARJY, Advocate, #14 & 15, 2nd Cross, Kodandarama Reddy layout, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore–16. Mobile - 9845784151

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Client **SMT. NIRMALA,** aged about 43 years, W/o Nataraj.M.G Residing at : No.No.78(V), 4th Cross, Pai Layout, Opp Food World Godown, Hulimavu B.G.Road, Bangalore-560076 wish to purchase agricultural land bearing Sy No.89/2, measuring 17 Guntas and 01 Gunta Kharab, situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District from its owner **SMT. T.A. SUVARNA,** Aged about 38 years, W/o Sri.C.R.Manohar, Residing at : No.36, 'G.L. Residency', Bagalur Main Road, Sarjapura Village & Post, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore-562125. who has a clear and marketable title to the Schedule Property.

Any person/s who claims any right, title or mortgage or charge or interest of any nature in relation to the Schedule property and/or has objections of any nature to the proposed transaction should lodge such claims and/or objections in writing to the undersigned together with supporting documents within 7 (Seven) days from the date of this notice, failing which it will be deemed that no valid claims or objections subsist and our client would proceed to complete the transaction with the present owner by entering into sale deed in their name subject to compliance with other statutory and legal formalities.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the agricultural land bearing Sy No.89/2, measuring 17 Guntas and 01 Gunta Kharab situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the:

East : Survey number .90,
West : Kaludari,
North : Survey number 89/1,
South : Survey number 88.

R.SURENDRA NATH BENARJY, Advocate, #14 & 15, 2nd Cross, Kodandarama Reddy layout, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore–16. Mobile - 9845784151

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CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our Client wish to purchase agricultural land bearing Sy No.91/1, measuring 15.08 Guntas and agricultural land bearing Sy No.91/2, measuring 16.08 Guntas both are situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District from its owner **MR. P. RANGASWAMY,** aged about 69 years, S/o Sri.Late.Papanna, Residing at :No.36, 'G.L. Residency', Bagalur Main Road, Sarjapura, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore-562125, who has a clear and marketable title to the Schedule Property.

Any person/s who claims any right, title or mortgage or charge or interest of any nature in relation to the Schedule property and/or has objections of any nature to the proposed transaction should lodge such claims and/or objections in writing to the undersigned together with supporting documents within 7 (Seven) days from the date of this notice, failing which it will be deemed that no valid claims or objections subsist and our client would proceed to complete the transaction with the present owner by getting sale deed in their name subject to compliance with other statutory and legal formalities.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ITEM-I: All that piece and parcel of the agricultural land bearing Sy No.91/1, measuring 15.08 Guntas situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the:

East : Sy No.92,
West : Sy No.90,
North : Sy No.91/2,
South : Sy No.90.

ITEM-II: All that piece and parcel of the agricultural land bearing Sy No.91/2, measuring 16.08 Guntas situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the:

East : Sy No.92,
West : Sy No.90,
North : Sy No.96,
South : Sy No.91/1.

R.SURENDRA NATH BENARJY, Advocate, #14 & 15, 2nd Cross, Kodandarama Reddy layout, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore–16. Mobile - 9845784151

Zonal Stressed Asset Recovery Branch Cuttack,
Plot No- CM- 2B, 1st Floor, Sector-7, Near Markat Nagar Police Station, CDA, Cuttack- 753014, Odisha, India.
Tel - 0671 2361377, Mob:7077727133, e-mail Id: armcut@bankofbaroda.co.in

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

"APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Mortgagor(s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Mortgagor/Guarantor/s/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below -

Sl. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagrs	Description of the Property	Total Dues	Date & Time of e-Auction	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increase Amount	Status of Possession	Property Inspection date & Time
1	**M/s Credence Infra Projects Pvt Ltd.** C/o- Shagun Projects Pvt Ltd,151, Mrinal Colony, Near MMTC Weigh Bridge, Barbil- Keonjhar- 758 035. **Director/Guarantor :1.Sh Pitambar Lal Agarwal,** 60, Jawahar Nagar Extn.,Varanasi, U.P.- 221 010 **2. Sh Kaushal Kumar Saraf** S/o Sh Hari Saraf CK- 23/28, Jawahar Nagar Varanasi, U.P.- 221 010 **3.Sh Ram Satish Kumar Kurup,**110 A, Stag Adithya 1st ,Main Ashwani Lay out, Koramangala, Bangalore- 560 047 **4.Sh Anil Singh,**G- 15, Hindalco Colony, Renukut, Sonebhadra, U.P.- 231 217 **Guarantor: Smt Kantadevi Agarwal** W/o Sh Pitambar Lal Agarwal, 60, Jawahar Nagar Extn., Varanasi, U.P.- 221 010	All that part and parcel of property consisting of Vacant Land situated at Mouza:- Giridih Dist. Giridih, Jharkhand, Khata No- 30, Plot No- 144, Touzi No- 15/ 11, PS .Giridih Town, measuring an area of 5 kathas standing in the name of Mrs Kantadevi Agarwal	**Rs. 1,89,61,765.48** + interest and charges w.e.f. **09.10.2013** as per Demand Notice **Dt. 09.10.2013** less recovery if any	**08-04-2021** from **02.00 pm** to **06.00 pm**	**Rs 27,00,000/-** **Rs. 2,70,000/-** **Rs. 10,000/-**	Symbolic	05th & 06th April 2021

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer to the link provided in https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm and https://ibapi.in. Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer on Tel No. 0671 2361377, Mobile: 7077727133.

STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO THE BORROWER/GUARANTOR/MORTGAGOR FOR SUBSEQUENT SALE UNDER RULE 8(5), 8(6) AND 9(1) AS PER AMENDED SARFAESI ACT 2002

Date: 19.03.2021
Place:Cuttack

Sd/- Authorised officer
Bank of Baroda

PUBLIC NOTICE
CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **JAYSHREE WAYBHASE** is legally wedded spouse of **No. 7782502A, Rank: HAV(MP), Name: WAYBHASE NAMADEO JAGANNATH,** presently R/a CC Wing, CMP Centre and School, Bangalore-25, permanently R/a **Village:** Pimpri (Ghata) **Teh:** Ashti, **District:** Beed, **State:** Maharashtra, **Pin-**414202 I have changed my name from **JAYSHREE WAYBHASE** to **WAYBHASE JAYSHREE NAMADEO,** vide affidavit dated 19-03-2021, before Notary **VIJAYAMURTHY R SONDE,** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **(OLD NAME) VIJAYAKUMARA CHANDRASHEKARIAH** S/o Chandrashekharaiah, Residing at No. 68/110, Kashi Vishwanath Layout, New Police Station Road, K.R Puram, Bangalore - 560 036 have changed my name from **(OLD NAME) VIJAYAKUMARA CHANDRASHEKARIAH** to **(NEW NAME) VIJAYAKUMAR. C** vide affidavit dated 16.03.2021 sworn before notary V. Srinivasa Reddy, Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **SANGEETA RAMSUBHAG PRAJAPATI,** D/o Ramsubhag Balli, Prajapathi W/o Anand Dev, R/at No.17, Ground Floor, 4th Cross, Bethel Nagar Behind SEA Collage, Virgonagar, Bangalore-560049, have changed my name from **PRAJAPATI SANGEETA DEVI RAMSUBHAG** to **SANGEETA RAMSUBHAG PRAJAPATI,** vide affidavit dated 18.03.2021, sworn before Advocate & Notary **N. KANCHIVARADARAJU,** Bangalore.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **MALLIKARJUNA PAGADA,** aged about 39 years, S/o. Channabassappa, R/at No. 8, Jyothsna, 2nd Main, 4th Cross, Vijayanagar, Bangalore -560040, have changed my name to **MALLIKARJUN PAGAD**

Vide affidavit dated 18-03-2021 sworn before Notary H.S. Sakalesh Aradhya, Bangalore

AFFIDAVIT

I, **YASHODHARA. BAI R,** W/o. Mr. Late Sathyanarayana Rao .M, Present R/at # 369, Doddamma Layout, Hulimavu, Near Thirumala House, Bangalore - 560 076. I hereby declare that my correct and detail date of birth is **05/06/1965** (asper mentioned in my PAN Card and Aadhar Card) and I further state that in my date of birth is mentioned in my I D Card is incorrect i.e., my work place at QUALITY LEATHER GARMENTS I join the Job on 01/09/2006 my Si. No. QL02766. vide affidavit dated 19/03/2021 sworn before Advocate & Notary Jain Swarnamala, Bangalore.

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Former Union Minister K H Muniyappa has said that Siddaramaiah is not alone in the race to become the CM after the next Assembly elections in the state. He has said that apart from Siddaramaiah, party stalwarts like Mallikarjun Kharge, DK Shivakumar, as well as G Parameshwara -are all in the chief ministerial race

STRAWS IN THE WIND

Sullen saffronistas!

It is the same old tug-of-war between the old guard and the newbies. Though is is more visible among the top leadership of any party, with the BJP, the rot is setting in the middle rung. Leaders, who have sweated it out for the last three to four decades, even before the saffron party became the indomitable force it is now, have abruptly stopped visiting the party office. Their grouse is with party state president Nalin Kumar Kateel, whose choice of members for various committees within the organisation, has made them sullen. But still, they say, "We could have at least taught these newcomers how to handle their responsibilities. We were not given a chance even for that." Talk about the camaraderie and discipline that the BJP touts about!

It is dawn of CD season

There is a dawn of new season this year! "For the government, there are different seasons... Summer, rainy and winter months. But there is a new one now... The CD season." The mock came from BJP MLC H Vishwanath, known for his acerbic tongue. The leader, who has switched from Congress to JDS to BJP, had a piece of advice to the government: "It should focus on development works and not become a CD Development Corporation." Some storm this CD has created this hot, summer season.

Hunger for publicity

Recently, agricultural minister B C Patil was in news for all the wrong reasons. He took a Covid jab at his residence, saying he had a busy schedule and could not go to the health centre, even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several other leaders had travelled to health centres for the vaccine. Patil's attitude enraged many, and social media had a field day with the minister. He held back that day, but came with a reply the next day: "If I had taken the jab in hospital it would not have become a national news." Didn't someone say even bad publicity is good publicity?

Letter claims threat to CT Ravi, Lalitha Naik

Warns of 'elimination' of 4 personalities on May 1; Bommai says issue will be probed

BANSY KALAPPA @Bengaluru

AMIDST the heat of the electioneering in five states, including neighbouring Tamil Nadu and Kerala, where many senior BJP leaders are actively campaigning, a letter, written in Kannada and addressed to former minister and writer **B T Lalitha Naik,** has claimed that there is a threat to the lives of BJP General Secretary in-charge of Tamil Nadu, **C T Ravi,** Kannada megastar Shivarajkumar, a TV journalist, and Lalitha Naik herself.

The letter, drawing the attention of Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, says that the four people will be targeted on May 1 and warns that there will be major unrest that will shock the state. It goes on to say that an individual has received supari to eliminate Chikkamagaluru MLA C T Ravi and that a team of eight people has already gone there.

Curiously, while the address on the inland letter is handwritten, the content itself is typed. It also claims that some SDPI members in Bengaluru, the Mangaluru president of the Indian Islamic Organization, and some others are involved in the conspiracy.

Home Minister Basavraj Bommai on Sunday said they will order an thorough investigation and added no one will be spared. "Lalitha Naik is a writer and former minister and she has lodged a complaint with the police. The government is taking the issue seriously and and we will take strict in this regard."

Farmers at the Mahapanchayat at Haveri on Sunday. Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait addressed the gathering

'Soudha Chalo' by farmers today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

AFTER a series of protest rallies and two Mahapanchayats over the weekend at Shivamogga and Haveri, farmer unions have given a call for a tractor rally and 'Vidhana Soudha Chalo' on Monday.

Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait on Saturday and Sunday had asked farmers to enter Bengaluru on tractors as part of their serial protest against the Union Government's three new farm laws and as a mark on solidarity with farmers protesting on Delhi borders for over three months now.

Leaders of Samyukt Kisan Morcha, including Tikait, Yudhvir Singh and Kodihalli Chandrashekhar, are expected to march from Bengaluru's Krantiveera Sangolli Rayanna Railway Station to Vidhana Soudha as farmers from neighbouring districts are expected to arrive in tractors.

The Bengaluru police had stopped a similar rally on Republic Day this year and seized tractors on the city's outskirts. District administration officials too had been told to stop tractors along their borders.

"Our protest will continue till the government repeals the laws. This is not just in solidarity with our brethren protesting in Delhi, but also for the welfare of the entire farming community," said Kuruburu Shantakumar, president, Cane Growers' Association.

Agitators are expected to be diverted to Freedom Park on Monday, where a public meeting is scheduled.

Farmer unions have called for another Mahapanchayat in Belagavi on March 31.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is selling the nation to private companies. Now, his government is eyeing the agriculture sector and trying to hand it over to private companies using the three laws

Rakesh Tikait, Bharatiya Kisan Union leader

Our protest will continue till the government repeals the laws. This is not just in solidarity with our brethren protesting in Delhi, but also for the welfare of the farming community

Kuruburu Shantakumar, president Cane Growers' Association

Govt selling nation to corporates, says Tikait

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Haveri

BHARATIYA Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait has once again exhorted farmers to lay siege to Bengaluru on tractors in protest against the new farm laws.

Taking part at a Mahapanchayat on the municipal grounds in Haveri on Sunday, he said tractors serve as multipurpose vehicles and more number of youths should take part in the indefinite movement for the welfare of the farming community.

Stressing that 2021 should be declared as the 'Year of Movements', he advised farmers to intensify the protest and not to step back until the Centre withdraws the three farm laws. He said that all farmers and labourers should support the agitation on Delhi's borders that is on for the last 156 days.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi is selling the nation to private companies and he has already given away 26 government boards and corporations to corporate companies. Now, his government is eyeing the agriculture sector and trying to hand it over to private companies using the three laws," Tikait said.

BKU General Secretary Yudhvir Singh said that though the government did not enjoy a majority in the Rajya Sabha, it passed the farm laws "in violation of the Constitution".

"But the same House is not taking up the Minimum Supportive Price Act in the same House for the welfare of farmers. The Union Government has neglected our movement and now this movement is extending to the entire country," he added.

Cong issues B-forms to bypoll candidates, BJP out on campaign trail without list

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

KARNATAKA Pradesh Congress Committee President DK Shivakumar on Sunday handed over B-forms to party candidates contesting the Basavakalyan and Maski Assembly bypolls.

In Basavakalyan, the party, which has fielded deceased MLA Narayana Rao's wife Mallamma, hopes to ride on the sympathy wave. In Maski, Congress expects former BJP leader Basanagouda Turvihal to romp home with the combined effort of his supporters his old and new parties.

The BJP, meanwhile, is expected to field former Congress MLA Pratapgouda Patil, who jumped ship in 2019. In fact, his entry into the BJP had resulted in the exit of Turvihal. The BJP is yet to announce the names of its candidates for the upcoming bypolls.

While the Congress' strategy of picking family members of deceased leaders for bypolls has seen some success in the recent past, the party's decision to field deceased former JDS MLA Mallappa Channaveerappa Managuli's son Ashok after bringing him into the party fold has not gone down well with local cadres. District Congress leaders are said to be miffed with the party for announcing Ashok's candidature even before bypoll has been announced for Sindagi.

Bypolls to Basavakalyan and Maski Assembly seats and Belagavi Lok Sabha are scheduled to be held on April 17 and counting of votes will be on May 2. Dates for Sindagi bypolls, however, have not been announced by the Election Commission of India yet.

Though the BJP is has not come out with the list of candidates, its poll campaign is on in full swing with party leaders in-charge taking the initiative to organise public meetings, corner meetings and networking with religious seers and caste leaders. On Sunday, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa along with BJP state unit chief Nalin Kumar Kateel and vice-president B Y Vijayendra, Deputy CMs Govind Karjol and Laxman Savadi addressed a gathering at Maski.

'BSY should quit over land cases'

The Congress has demanded that CMB S Yediyurappa should resign in view of the pending land denotification cases against him. At a press conference on Sunday, former MP V S Ugrappa, MLA Krishna Byregowda and AICC spokesman Brijesh Kalappa said the Karnataka High Court has revived a case relating to denotification of 24 acres of land, which was acquired by the government in Devanahalli and Dobbspet. "This is the first such case in the country. Yediyurappa became Chief Ministership claiming that he will rid himself of the taint of corruption from his first term but the 'corruption' tag is sticking to him harder", they claimed.

BJP GETS INTO WAR OF WORDS OVER WARDROBE WITH SIDDARAMAIAH

CLP leader Siddaramaiah tweeted (in Kannada), "They go somewhere take off their clothes and lose their self-respect, I have purchased clothes to be donated to BJP4Karanataka. I will give Nalin Kumar Kateel one or two sets of clothes. They say there are 19 (sleazy) CDs. Let everything be in control, even the tongue." The state unit of the BJP hit back, calling him a 'Majavadi,' a pleasure seeker, and alleged that there are stories of a government Jaladarshini Guest House, without taking the names of either Siddaramaiah or his colleagues from the past.

HDK: NO DOUBLING OF INCOME, BUT EXPENSES UP FOR FARMERS

ENS @Bengaluru

THE JDS, which has an alliance with the BJP in the Upper House, on Sunday launched an attack, asking the ruling party where is the doubling of farmers' income it had promised.

JDS leader H **D Kumaraswamy,** in a series of tweets, said that the government had said it would double the income of farmers by 2022, but the sad reality is that their expenditure has doubled. He said that prices of fertilisers and diesel have gone up and the cost of installing a borewell has shot up. Then, where is the question of doubling of farm incomes, he said.

He said that it costs ₹1 lakh to 2 lakh to dig a borewell, while the prices of PVC pipes and motor have doubled.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has to answer questions about his government's inability to double farmers' income and also the hike in inputs resulting in an increasing burden for farmers, he said. Modi expresses concern over the plight of farmers, is he sincere, he asked.

State BJP tears into Congress over letter by ex-Mumbai top cop

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

THE massive letter bomb dropped by former Mumbai police commissioner Parmbir Singh, making serious allegations against Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, has given the ammunition to Karnataka BJP leaders to tear into Congress, which is part of the ruling alliance in the neighbouring state.

While BJP National General Secretary C T Ravi took on the coalition government in Maharashtra, the BJP Karnataka official social media pages used the controversy to question Congress' Rahul Gandhi.

"Does Maharashtra have a Home Minister or Hafta Vasuli Minister? Will CM @OfficeofUT please clarify?" asked Ravi. In another tweet, the BJP General Secretary said, "Hum Teen, Humara Mission Ek -- Hafta Vasuli!!! #MahaVasuliAghadi," taking a jibe at Rahul Gandhi's 'Hum do hamare do', line used to criticise the Union Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. BJP Karnataka social media pages jumped on to the bandwagon with, "Dear @RahulGandhi, When you talk about Hum Do Hamare Do, are you talking about Param Bir Singh and Anil Deshmukh ?"

The former Mumbai police commissioner, who was recently shunted out, in an eight-page letter to Chief Minister of Maharashtra Uddhav Thackeray has alleged that Anil Deshkmukh asked police officer Sachin Vaze to collect ₹100 crore extortion money every month from bars.

Ravi even used the allegation to take a swipe at DMK in Tamil Nadu. The BJP has a pre-poll alliance with AIADMK -- the archrival of MK Stalin-led DMK.

"Is it true that many DMK leaders are busy counting the number of ZEROES in ₹100 crore???" Ravi asked attacking the DMK and the MVA coalition of Maharashtra simultaneously.

Hum Teen, Humara Mission Ek -- Hafta Vasuli!!! #MahaVasuli-Aghadi

CT Ravi, taking a jibe at Rahul Gandhi's 'Hum do hamare do', line used to criticise the Centre

B'luru may host Global Investors' Meet in Dec

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mangaluru

MINISTER for Large and Medium Industries **Jagadish Shettar** has said that the 'Global Investors' Meet' will be held in Bengaluru, tentatively in December this year if the Covid-19 situation is under control. If not, it will be pushed to February 2022. After inaugurating the Karnataka Coastline Business Conclave-2021 in Mangaluru on Sunday, he said the State Government is planning to set up five to six industrial townships across the state.

In the recent budget, CM B S Yediyurappa announced that the first such township will come up at Peenya in Bengaluru.

Shettar said that amendments to Land Reforms Act, Industries (Facilitation) Act and others have helped in industrial development of the region. "Despite the pandemic, the State Government has approved 382 industrial proposals worth ₹76,376 crore which will generate 1.77 lakh jobs," he said.

"Karnataka stands first in attracting investments in the country. Of the ₹4 lakh crore worth of investments that the country received in the last one year, Karnataka's share was ₹1.60 lakh crore, 39% of the total investments," he said.

Of the `4 lakh crore worth of investments that the country received in the last one year, Karnataka's share was `1.60 lakh crore — Jagadish Shettar, minister

EXPRESS READ

Sadhguru for growing timber on pvt farms

Bengaluru: Isha Foundation founder Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev on Sunday asked farmers to grow high-quality timber on private farmlands for economic gain. Speaking at the 'Cauvery Calling' programme, he pushed for agro-forestry and growing of trees on farms instead of relying on forest produce. ENS

DESPERATE MEASURES

For these ryots, farming tough, but finding brides tougher

AJITH M S @Mysuru

THE suicide of young farmers, Praveen from Nanjangud and Santhosh from Bidragodu -- both near Mysuru, over the last eight months had a common thread... Despite struggling hard for years, both were denied marriage alliances with girls' families preferring someone with a job in the government or private sector.

"We don't justify the step he took, but he spent over eight years searching for a bride. Many who turned him away would say that it would have been good if he had agriculture as a part-time work," said Sachin, a relative Santhosh,33.

"We are seen as unemployed. Also, the majority of us are small farmers with a couple of acres. We cannot take up a part-time white-collar job as we have to work constantly on our fields, only then it works for us," said Sachin.

The 32-year-old Praveen from Chandravadi village in Nanjangud committed suicide last month for the same reason. "His family is well-to-do and have 10 acres of land. Yet, he was rejected as families did not want to marry off their daughter to a farmer," said Shrimalli Siddappa, president of Raitha Sangha Nanjangud taluk unit.

"Many come to me with cases of young farmers struggling to find partners. We are helpless. Families look for financially stable grooms for their girls," he added.

The issue is acute among farmers who are from non-irrigated pockets or away from urban centres. "My friends near Immavu, which has an industrial area close to it, had it easy as the value of their land is good. But for others, who have farms in other parts of Mysuru taluk, it is difficult," said Madhu, a young farmer from Ahalli village in Mysuru who too is struggling to get an alliance. He blamed the unstable earnings of farmers, a fallout of poor policies over the years, and the recent farm laws that dismantle whatever checks and balances that existed till now, for the social issue. "We spend about ₹10,000-15,000 to grow paddy. But if we lose the crop, we get a compensation of ₹2,500-3,000. Even if we raise the crop, we don't get a good price. Also, most crops are not covered under the minimum support price. Everything is against us, even though we are the annadatas," he rued.

Farmer leaders suggested that young farmers should be given financial assistance similar to those marrying Brahmin priests and those entering into inter-caste marriages. "This could be a solution. We see many youngsters moving away from farming, citing this among many other reasons," said Hoskote Basavaraj of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha.

Andhra CM Jagan Mohan Reddy's sister YS Sharmila, who is keen on gaining political ground in Telanana, might seek election to the Assembly in 2023 from either Palair or Khammam.

● Will carve out Arni from Tiruvannamalai district, he says ● Flays DMK chief Stalin for calling him a 'fake farmer'

EPS PROMISES CREATION OF NEW DIST IN TN

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Tiruvannamalai

TAMIL Nadu could soon get another district, as Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami has promised that a new one, headquartered in Arni, would be carved out of Tiruvannamalai district. He said this while campaigning in the region on Sunday, and pledged that loans of up to ₹1 lakh, taken by handloom weavers and power loom workers, would be waived.

"Power looms will get 1,000 units of free electricity, instead of the present 750, and handloom and power loom workers will get a compensation of ₹5,000," he added.

While canvassing for Minister for Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) 'Sevoor' S Ramachandran in Arni, Palaniswami accused Stalin's father M Karunanidhi of cheating his way to becoming the Chief Minister. "VR Nedunchezhian was to be the Chief Minister, but Karunanidhi grabbed the post in a crooked manner. Unlike him, I was elected by a majority of MLAs."

At another election meeting in Vandavasi, Palaniswami lashed out at DMK chief MK Stalin for calling him a "fake" farmer. "Stalin came to Thalaivasal in a full-sleeved shirt, pants and shoes, and walked on a concrete road to a farm. A real farmer would never do that."

"My family has been engaged in farming for about 70 years, and unlike him (Stalin), I know how to till land. By calling me a fake farmer, he has insulted the farming community," he added.

The Chief Minister went on to highlight his government's aid to farmers, and pointed out that Tamil Nadu exceeded its food-production target of 100 lakh tons, and won the Centre's prestigious Krishi Karman award for the last five years. "When drought struck, we gave farmers ₹2,247 crore, and helped them get crop insurance worth ₹9,300 crore," he said.

As for communal tension, he said the State remains peaceful because the AIADMK government protects the interest of minorities. The DMK, on the other hand, didn't even vote for the late APJ Abdul Kalam when he contested the Presidential polls, Palaniswami asserted.

DMK president M K Stalin campaigns for his party candidates in Ambattur OT, Chennai, on Sunday | P JAWAHAR

'Cracker boys' add bang to poll rallies

K EZHILARASAN @Perambalur

EVERYONE talks about the crowds at political campaigns. But not many notice who gathers them before the politicians arrive. More often than not, electoral candidates get delayed as they pack a tight, back-to-back schedule. But the villagers, who gather to hear their leaders speak, cannot wait endlessly for them.

So after a wait for more than an hour or two, they tend to disperse. But thanks to 'cracker boys', the contestants don't come to an empty arena.

"On hearing my crackers, people rush out of their houses and gather," says a proud Kathiravan, one such cracker boy of Kanakiliyanallur in Tiruchy district. This 25-year-old "rocket man" is known for his seemingly effortless skill of bursting 10 rocket crackers in quick succession, making it look a folk art. Kathiravan goes ahead of politicians, bursting the 'rockets' and a string of other fireworks to let villagers know it's time to assemble.

"On Saturday alone, I burst crackers at about 25 villages in Perambalur district. When clients buy fireworks from our unit, they hire me to burst them. There are at least 10 youngsters in the villages around Lalgudi who burst crackers for a living," Kathiravan says, adding that he's been doing this for the past 10 years, and gets ₹500 a day, besides a free meal.

Though he kicks off campaigns, Kathiravan doesn't get to stay on for them. Even before candidates start their speeches, he's on a mini-truck, all set to head to the next village.

Centre, state govts out to destroy fisheries: Church

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kollam

THE state government led by LDF, which boasts of a strong support base in the coastal belt in the state, has come in for sharp criticism from the Latin Catholic Church that has a significant influence among the fisher community over its fishing policy just days ahead of the assembly elections.

Kollam Bishop Paul Antony Mullassery's pastoral letter, read out in the Latin Catholic churches in the diocese on Sunday, said there was an attempt to destroy the state's fishing sector and sell it to monopolies.

The letter, titled 'Fisheries: Care and vigilance needed', called for defeating the policies adopted by the Central and state governments against the fisher families. The bishop said though the state government's deep-sea trawler agreement with EMCC International Private Ltd was withdrawn due to the strong opposition, he was shocked to learn that clandestine efforts and legislation to overthrow the existing fisheries sector by allowing corporates and private monopolies to have dominance have already taken place.

Paul Antony demanded that any policies and decisions taken to destroy the traditional fisheries sector in the name of tourism and development should be opposed by the government. The letter also criticised the amendment to the Fish Marketing Act.

It said the move to sell the fisheries sector to monopolies will destroy the livelihood of fishermen.

Vattiyoorkavu Assembly constituency's UDF candidate Veena S Nair seeks votes at Lourdes Forane Church, in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday | BP DEEPU

Boycotted families facing trouble finding jobs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE boycott did not end with Manjunath. His mother, wife and children too were ostracised. "My children, who used to go to school, were told by the parents of others children not to share their books, pens and pencils or talk to them. This continued for a few months until schools were closed due to Covid-19. I thought the boycott would be temporary, but recently, my daughter came home one day saying that she would not go to school as her friends do not speak or mix with her. In all, 12 families, all of whom are either our relatives or friends, are now facing boycott," Manjunath claimed.

The families are facing trouble in finding jobs and other means of livelihood. Nobody shares food and shop owners do not sell groceries to them. They have to depend on shops outside the village. Over the last two years, Manjunath has repeatedly appealed to the villagers to end the boycott, but to no avail.

Manjunath and his family members, who are facing social boycott for the past two years at Yennemadi near Hirregutti village in Uttara Kannada district | EXPRESS

Even a death in one of the families did not move the villagers. "An elderly person in our family died. When we informed the villagers, no one came. Some villagers who attended the cremation have also been ostracised. Even anganawadi workers, who came to take the children from our families, are also facing boycott," said Parvathi Haller, a woman from the village.

When allW of his efforts to convince the villagers to accept them back did not yield results, Manjuath wrote to the Uttara Kannada district deputy commissoner, Governor Vajubhai Vala, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and others, highlighting their plight, a few months ago. But nothing changed for them.

When contacted, Deputy Commissioner Mullai Muhilan, who recently assumed office, told *The New Indian Express* that he will look into the issue immediately and resolve it.

Kalasa-Banduri: Goa activists protest during SC panel visit

Belagavi: While a three-member committee was inspecting the Kalasa-Banduri project near Kanakumbi village in Khanapur taluk on Sunday, some environmentalists from Goa allegedly tried to intervene. The Supreme Court formed a committee of experts representing Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa on March 19 to inspect the site. No one, apart from the experts, was allowed at the site. However, the committee member representing Goa allegedly came with a few environmentalists and journalists. Although, the police prohibited them from entering the site, representatives of Goa argued with officers till late evening over the issue. The police said, "The committee itself had instructed us not to allow anyone during the inspection. Thus, we followed the orders." ENS

50-62 % GARMENT WORKERS FORCED TO RESIGN: REPORT

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

A report on the status of garment factory workers revealed that about 50-62 per cent of the workforce was forced to resign by factory managements in Bengaluru.

"Forced Resignations, Stealthy Closures", a study by Garment and Textile Workers' Union (GATWU) and Alternative Law Forum (ALF), was conducted in two phases. Between September and October 2020, 89 workers from 25 factories were interviewed, while 65 of the same workers were interviewed between January and February 2021.

"Workers at 17 of the 25 factories surveyed reported that they had been asked to resign by the companies due to 'losses' suffered. Altogether, 81 per cent of workers said they had resigned. The rest were protesting the closure or were yet to resign. Of those who had resigned, 85 per cent said they had been asked to resign by the factory. Many reported that when their factories said they were closing, they were presented with two options -- resigning and getting their dues or not resigning and suffering a delay or losing out on their dues. This is clear evidence of a coercive situation created by factory managements," the report stated.

EXPRESS ILLUSTARTION

"In our survey of 25 factories in three garment clusters in Bengaluru, nine had closed entirely, resulting in anywhere between 5,600 and 7,200 workers losing their jobs during the pandemic. The remaining 16 factories in our survey reduced their workforce, resulting in loss of jobs to about 11,000 workers. Given that between 30,000 and 35,000 workers were employed in the 25 factories, it can be estimated that on an average, about 50 to 62 per cent of the workforce in the surveyed factories had been forced to resign," the report added.

"Nutrition took a major hit due to the loss of income in the households of these workers. Workers cut down on meat, vegetables, fruits, snacks, and beverages such as tea and coffee. In some cases, the number of meals was down from thrice to twice or even once a day. Those with school-going children reported shifting them from private to government schools," the survey revealed.

CRIME PATROL

Truck knocks down three in Channapatna

Bengaluru: Three youths were killed, while three were injured, when a truck knocked them down on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway in Channapatna on Saturday. The deceased are Vijay (24) and Pradeep (22), who worked at an aluminium fabrication unit, and Madan (23), a driver. Police said that Vijay, Pradeep, and their friends were going to Mysuru in a Tempo Traveller, to attend a wedding. Around 11.45 pm, they stopped near an eatery in Yarabnagar. While they were standing, a speeding truck knocked down six people, including them. "While one was killed on the spot, five others were rushed to a nearby hospital, where two succumbed to their injuries," the Channapatna Traffic police, who have registered a case, said. ENS

Thief who targeted bus passengers held

Bengaluru: Byatarayanapura police arrested a man for stealing at bus stations, and have recovered valuables worth Rs 12 lakh from him. The accused, Siddique (30), is a resident of Kaverinagar near Laggere. Police said that he was arrested in connection with a case registered on January 10. A woman had filed a complaint, stating that miscreants had stolen 25gm of gold jewellery from her bag at the Satellite Bus Station. "Based on the complaint, information was gathered about the accused, and Siddique was arrested. He used to target bus passengers. Four cases have been cracked with his arrest, and 275gm of gold jewellery worth Rs 12 lakh has been recovered," the police added. ENS

Cook stabs colleague in a fit of rage

Bengaluru: A fight between two cooks ended in murder in a pub in JP Nagar police station limits, on Saturday. The deceased, Sagar (25), hailed from West Bengal and was living in JP Nagar. The accused, Moushik, hails from Tripura and has been absconding after the incident. Police said that the duo was working as cooks at Wall Street pub in JP Nagar and they frequently fought with each other over not doing work. Around 9.30 pm, they both started fighting in the kitchen. Sagar allegedly assaulted Moushik, who took a knife and stabbed the former in the chest before fleeing. "The pub's staffers rushed him to a hospital, where he was declared brought dead. We have taken up a murder case," police added. ENS

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EDITORIAL

When students cheat on exams, it's because our school system values grades more than students value learning

Neil deGrasse Tyson

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

MAHA EXPOSÉ MAKES MINISTER'S POSITION UNTENABLE

Outgoing Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh on Saturday opened state home minister Anil Deshpande's can of worms, exposing the shocking protection money racket the latter is running in the city. That he sought to employ police officers to do the dirty job, fixing targets for extortion from dance bars, restaurants and other establishments to raise a monthly sum of ₹50 crore from them—plus another ₹50 crore through other means—was nothing less than a jaw-dropper. In other words, he was acting like a mafia don, a la Dawood Ibrahim, employing the very force meant to protect citizens against exploitation. Singh's charges cannot be brushed off, though they can be attributed to the hurt ego of a senior IPS officer whose reputation Deshmukh sought to smear. The minister indeed qualified his transfer in the wake of the arrest of 'encounter specialist' Sachin Waze in the bomb scare attempt outside industrialist Mukesh Ambani's house Anitlla, as the fallout of unpardonable lapses in the case probe and not due to administrative reasons. But Singh covered his base by reproducing the social media chat he exchanged with a colleague regarding Deshmukh's extortion fiat to corroborate his charges, in his letter to CM Uddhav Thackeray. That he kept NCP's Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar, the party to which Deshmukh belongs, in the loop, perhaps explains the minister's outburst. But who fixed whom in the final analysis?

In hindsight it does appear the bomb scare at Antilla was to gorge out a hefty sum from the industrialist to quickly achieve the monthly ₹50 crore through-other-means target set by Deshmukh. That attempt bombed and revealed the dirty underbelly of the three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi.

Corruption in politics is well known but rarely have politicians occupying high offices been this brazen. The last known fall guy was the then BJP chief Bangaru Laxman, who was caught on tape in 2001 receiving kickbacks in a fake defence deal. Corruption cannot and should not be normalised. Deshmukh must be forced to resign immediately and made to face the full force of the law. Confidence in the police force also needs to be restored so that they are not reduced to *hafta* collection agents.

NO FANS FROM ABROAD, BUT SHOW WILL GO ON

The modern Olympics, for all its emphasis on 'citius, altius, fortius' (faster, higher, stronger), has been run on completely different messaging: The show must go on. It has survived terrorist attacks, a bitter proxy war and alarming viruses. The Covid pandemic almost brought down the establishment but, as it stands, it is on course to survive this as well, with just one change from the normal: a ban on international fans.

Even if the athletes contribute a major portion of the theatre one associates with big-ticket sporting events—World Cups, Majors, F1 races, multi-discipline intra- and inter-continental games and the Olympics, to name a few—the paying public are generally responsible for the atmosphere and the colour associated with these tournaments. Sure, Japan's myriad sports fans will buy tickets and go to stadia, but there is a big difference between the noise they bring in and the sound accompanying overseas fans. The overseas travelling fan is a unique breed; they live for experiences like these and their mere presence immediately lends more aura and authenticity to the experience. While locals will buy a ticket or two before checking out, the fans from overseas will stay in that country for a good two to three weeks, learn about the culture and visit as many stadia as possible. They elevate the spectacle. Even if it's understandable as to why the organisers have decided to ban overseas fans from the Olympics in Tokyo, it is still a shame because it's possible that spectacle and colour will be lost. For example, an Indian fan conversing with a Dutch fan in Rio de Janeiro while cheering on a Kiwi athlete added to the theatre in 2016. That will not be possible in Tokyo.

The bigger thing, from Japan's perspective, is the loss of revenue as a result of this decision. Money will have to be refunded, hotels that accepted advance bookings will have to cancel them before giving back the money and an economy that depended on overseas fans for a timely boost will have to look elsewhere.

The last four attempts at rapprochement were derailed due to actions initiated from Pak. What has changed in Islamabad that we can foresee a different course ahead?

PEACE IN THE SUBCONTINENT: IS PAKISTAN SERIOUS?

AMIT BANDRE

LT GEN SYED ATA HASNAIN (RETD)

Former Commander, Srinagar-based 15 Corps. Now Chancellor, Central University of Kashmir

Accepting and agreeing to a ceasefire proposal from an adversary is always good sense. However, taking that beyond to anything more substantial has to be viewed against the backdrop of previous experience, the history of peace overtures, the compulsions that brought about the proposals and our own strategic interests. We seem to be living in an era of reset, the backdrop of which has Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa choosing a serious platform, the National Security Division's Islamabad Security Dialogue, to deliver a carefully drafted address that spoke of his nation's comprehensive security, with economics and cooperation at its core and the advantages of its geostrategic location as the theme. The address gloved within it only a short reference, actually just one paragraph, with a clear and focused reference to India. Within that he conveyed three points. First, without the resolution of Kashmir through peaceful means, the process of subcontinental rapprochement is not possible. Second, that it was time to bury the past and move forward. Third, that the onus lay on India, which has to create a conducive environment, particularly in Kashmir. In international politics this is not unusual. Attempting to take a high horse of morality at the outset and trying to speak down to an adversary should never surprise anyone. What Pakistan says in public is for internal consumption and for image management; the truth will be spoken in private and in back channels.

The history of the last 30 years clearly reveals four attempts at rapprochement; none of them stayed the course due to actions initiated from Pakistan. In 1999, Atal Bihari Vajpayee undertook a journey of peace to Lahore. Within four months, the Indian Army was launching high-altitude attacks in Kargil where Musharraf had emplaced his regular soldiers at the heights. The second effort at Agra, again at the behest of Vajpayee, met the one condition that most analysts allude to for success in Indo-Pak relations; the existence of a strong nationalist political leadership in India along with the Pakistan Army at the helm on the other side. Yet the Agra summit was a disaster. The third attempt was in middle to late 2003, by when Musharraf was viewing Vajpayee with awe and was willing to risk engagement after the experience of Operation Parakram. Five years of back-channel engagement with Musharraf's four-point formula and Manmohan Singh's doctrine of irrelevant borders facilitated by a successful ceasefire at the LoC and reduction in violence in Kashmir ended with the Mumbai terror attack on 26/11. The fourth attempt was made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He initiated it with his Ufa meeting with Nawaz Sharif in July 2015; this was followed by the meeting of the NSAs at Bangkok and Sushma Swaraj's visit to Islamabad for the Heart of Asia Conference. After these, there was Modi's surprise visit to Lahore while returning from Kabul, which could have seen the beginning of a transformational effort. Pathankot, Uri and Nagrota with spiked resistance from Pakistan-sponsored separatists and terror groups ensured this initiative's death knell.

So what has changed in Pakistan that we can in some way foresee a different course ahead for the nascent overtures from General Bajwa, which have been sandwiched between sanctimonious explanations of Pakistan's strategic and economic worth? It's not the words of the speech but the extant situation in Pakistan's political, economic and social fabric that will make the difference. With lives of 200 million at risk, the Pakistan leadership cannot take this lightly. Has the most serious internal threat abated in any way? Radical Islam is all-pervading and far too many times, the Pakistan Army has pandered to the demands of the jihadis. It may not be long before demands are made towards giving more energy towards recalibration of the so-called Kashmir struggle. We are aware that Musharraf's efforts also came to naught largely because his Corps Commanders were not with him. Internal dissension within the Pakistan Army is a common phenomenon and the composition of the deep state that runs its strategic affairs remains dynamic. Thus the opinion of the Army Chief may not always be supported by other stakeholders. General Bajwa has been known to be a pragmatist. Those who know him speak of his intellectual orientation and broad opinion in favour of rapprochement with India. He did allude to it a couple of times with the media, which got stamped as the Bajwa Doctrine.

> The Pakistan Army chief has been known to be a pragmatist. But internal dissension within its Army is a common phenomenon. Musharraf's efforts also came to naught largely because his Corps Commanders were not with him

In India, logical cynicism is bound to emerge although mainstream media is of the opinion that giving peace a chance is always good policy. Cynicism has its reasons. Bajwa and Imran Khan expect India to take the first steps to create a conducive environment in J&K; what that means from a Pakistani perception is anybody's guess. It would start with the rollback of Article 370 and 35A, restoration of statehood, reduction in the deployed strength of the Army, ceasing all operations in the hinterland, and giving the anti-India and pro-Pakistan elements the freedom to operate as they wish. In other words, for Pakistan, normalcy in J&K means the creation of the environment for a UN-led plebiscite. None of this is anywhere on the cards, which means the start point of Pakistan's effort at rapprochement is flawed. It's not the heavy lifting with which such an effort can start; there are low-hanging fruits that can be identified and Siachen is definitely not one of them, as many in the senior leadership of the Pakistan Army may imagine. The restoration of full diplomatic relations, reduction of rhetoric, medical visas, religious tourism and even sports and games are all contributive towards betterment of ties. As long as turbulence in J&K is at a low key, it will be within India's threshold of tolerance. It's the ceasefire violations, violence in the streets and big-ticket terror attacks such as Pulwama that have to be avoided at all costs. India already controls J&K with drastically reduced levels of violence and far better freedom from controls. It's early yet but a back channel with Pakistan could actually be helpful at this stage.

(atahasnain@gmail.com)

SHOULD CHEATING BE REDEFINED FOR ONLINE EXAMS?

ATANU BISWAS

Professor of Statistics, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata

Many academic institutes around the globe were forced to conduct online exams in the last year. However, the integrity of these exams is at stake as there have been complaints of rampant cheating in such tests.

An online exam is nothing but a take-home test, which has been practised for decades. It's widely believed that these are being compromised as the students are taking the help of the internet and external experts. Some institutes ask students to write exams while keeping a mobile or laptop camera focused on them so that they can be invigilated remotely. However, in a world where many students lack access even to a single online connecting device and sufficient high-speed internet, this seems impractical. The approaches attempted or discussed to circumvent 'cheating' include using a double shuffle examination software, online proctoring software, setting lengthy question papers so that the students don't get enough time to discuss answers, a combination of written and oral tests, and setting innovative questions wherein answers for each student differ.

However, measures to curb cheating in such online exams are often not very effective. IIT Bombay had cancelled a November 22 exam after reports emerged of cheating. One may employ video surveillance and other sophisticated technology, but the cat and mouse game would continue through various WhatsApp groups, browsing the internet on a separate device, etc. And new ways to counter surveillance would pop up. Not to forget, the mentality of 'cheating' is not alien in our society; starting from school projects and assignments, cheating happens on offline exams as well. Moreover, such a game is bound to induce a lack of trust between the students and teachers.

In fact, the academic world was rocked by cheating incidents involving take-home exams in some of the most renowned universities even before the pandemic. The 2012 Harvard scandal involved approximately 125 students who were investigated for cheating on the take-home final exam in an introductory course in politics. An estimated 70% of the investigated students were forced to withdraw. Interestingly, in 2010 and 2011, these take-home exams were essays, but in 2012 they were changed to a short answer format. The 2007 cheating scandal at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business involving a take-home exam resulted in the punishment of 34 graduate students. West Point, Ohio State University and University of Central Florida were also rocked by similar incidents in the past.

Still, some experts believe that take-home exams may be the preferred assessment method on the upper levels of Bloom's taxonomy scale because they promote higher-order thinking skills and allow time for reflection. But what about the questions of pandemic-driven online exams? Take an example. It's reported that in some university paper with five questions required to be answered out of eight, the solutions to seven could be found through a simple internet search! Are such questions ideal for online exams? In a 1983 article in the journal *Research in Higher Education*, researchers from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University observed that, for the same question paper, the mean percent achievement test scores for 'knowledge items' for closed-book, open-book, and take-home exams were 55.8, 62.5 and 68.8 respectively, while these mean scores for 'application items' were 60.0, 60.5 and 61.0 respectively. Thus, knowledge items are not quite suitable for take-home exams. Subsequently, of course, the massification of higher education and the emergence of the internet have fundamentally changed university education and its dynamics of take-home exams.

> To get out of the comfort zone of the standard bookish format is not easy. But can the pandemic trigger our education system to introspect and engage in extensive debates? As American journalist Farhad Manjoo asked, why should students not be allowed to collaborate? After all, working together is an essential skill

Thus, it's clear that questions for the unproctored, take-home online tests should be such that ready-made answers can't be found in standard textbooks or even on the internet. And that's possible to ensure, especially at the higher taxonomy level. The grading of open-ended problems for a large number of students may not be consistent though.

Not every student cheats. But why do some? A circular argument dominates that almost everybody else must be practising unfair means to gain relative advantage, so the 'honest' students would be penalised in their grades and relative ranking. It may be a vicious circle and it's almost impossible to eliminate cheating in online tests. But what if cheating is redefined in this case? Not everybody is critical of students who were accused of collaboration or cheating. In an opinion piece written in *Slate* in September 2012 on the Harvard cheating issue, American journalist Farhad Manjoo wrote: "Outside of Harvard, these students won't face many situations in which they'll be prohibited from consulting with other people. Instead, they'll have to act exactly as the alleged 'cheaters' did in this case." But can our education system expand its wings? In today's world, the instructor's role has changed from 'lecturing' to 'facilitating' and the student's role has changed from 'recipient' to 'participant'. Farhad Manjoo wrote further: "Talking about an exam with your friends feels like cheating. But it's time we realised it's not, and that teaching people how to work together is a critical skill. Today, in most areas of life—the government, the military, science, the corporate world—real breakthroughs occur in groups. It's time our universities prized group work, too."

Sounds radical? Can the pandemic trigger our education system to introspect and engage in extensive debates? To get out of the comfort zone of the standard bookish format and gazing through a pair of changed spectacles, however, is never easy, even for me. And it is the same everywhere and for everyone.

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MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Cop-politician nexus

The former Mumbai Police Commissioner has made serious allegations against the state home minister and adds he had brought it to the notice of the CM, Deputy CM and Sharad Pawar. Such cop-politician nexus is common. Politicians will close their ranks and try to make him pay. They will succeed as such allegations are difficult to prove in court.

C Vijay Kumar, Bengaluru

Serious allegations, but...

The accusation by Param Bir Singh against the home minister of extortion of money is serious. But the commissioner too has to be blamed as it happened right under his nose.

Mark Rego, Bengaluru

Socialism hasn't helped

While a few are astronomically rich, the majority are still extremely poor (*Struggle, struggle and struggle again*, Mar 21). Seventy years of socialism have led India nowhere. We need nothing short of radical reforms in the economic sphere.

Seshagiri Row Karry, Hyderabad

Kudos to Andhra police

It is heartening to learn that the Andhra DGP and the state police have won laurels (*State police receive recognition from 3 national-level bodies*, Mar 21).

C Ghanshyam, Visakhapatnam

Dissent, democracy's soul

Pratap Bhanu Mehta's abrupt resignation from Ashoka University has led to protests not only from students but scholars all over the world. That dissent is the soul of democracy seems to have been lost sight of by the powers that be.

S K Choudhury, Bengaluru

Turkey decision sad

Even when laws are present, violence against women continues. Turkey's move to withdraw from the Istanbul convention is unfortunate (*Global outrage as Turkey quits treaty to protect women against violence*, Mar 21).

K Jayanthi, Chennai

Is it not our tradition?

'Metroman' and BJP candidate E Sreedharan has been trolled by his opponents from the Left Front. Sreedharan is a role model for the younger generation. Is it not our Indian tradition to respect our elders and get their blessings by showing reverence to them by touching their feet?

M Pradyu, Kannur

Embarrassment for BJP

It is a shame for a political party like the BJP to have the nomination papers of its candidates rejected as the formalities were not proper. The party should take action against the state unit.

Aravindaksha Menon, Pattambi

Chola rule and a chariot

Kudos to the article *Tiruvarur, the temple town with two chariots* (Mar 18) for highlighting the glorious Chola era. It is great that the grand chariot festival will be held again there this week after a gap of three decades.

Venkat Desikan, Chennai

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Chairman of the Board: **Manoj Kumar Sonthalia** Editor: **G S Vasu**

Resident Editor (Karnataka) : **Santwana Bhattacharya*** Published by **R K Jhunjhunwala** on behalf of Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited, at No. 1, Queen's Road, Bengaluru - 560 001 and printed by him at Express Press, Plot No. 2A, Bommasandra Industrial Area, 4th Phase, Survey No. 46, Part Yarandahalli Village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk. Bengaluru - 560 099. **Bengaluru.** Vol. 57, No. 69 RNI Reg. No. 3457/1960. Phone: 080-22866893. * Responsible for selection of News under the PRB Act. **Copyright:** Express Publications (Madurai) Private Limited. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner, electronic or otherwise, in whole or in part, without prior written permission is prohibited.

TWEETS OF THE DAY

Piyush Goyal @PiyushGoyal
The intention of the Govt is pure regarding Farm Laws. These laws open new doors for the farmers to: Develop New Products & Explore New Markets

Deepender S Hooda @DeependerSHooda
It is very unfortunate that the BJP leaders are continuously insulting the farmers. This ego will cause their downfall

Prashant Bhushan @pbhushan1
In a year since becoming MP, Justice Gogoi has attended RS only on 3 days. His claim to want to contribute to Parliament lies in the sealed cover of his mind

ASSEMBLY ELECTION 2021 DECIDE

BJP under the leadership of PM @NarendraModi Ji will leave no stone unturned in realising the dream of Sonar Bangla

Amit Shah, Union Home Minister

A resident of Gujarat with a resident of Madhya Pradesh by his (right) side, releases a manifesto and then makes a full speech in Hindi to create a #ShonarBangla

Derek O'Brien, TMC MP

The Congress government is going to be run by the people of Assam, for the people of Assam and not on the instructions of people from Delhi

Rajeev Shukla, Congress leader

Didi questions EVMs fearing defeat, says PM

BJP deploys heavy artillery in south Bengal as PM, Amit Shah address election rallies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kolkata

UNLEASHING a blistering attack on the West Bengal chief minister on Sunday, Prime Minister Narandra Modi said Mamata Banerjee is repeatedly questioning the credibility of EVMs due to her fear of defeat. "You are questioning about EVMs' functioning. These EVMs gifted you 10 years in power. Now you are questioning because you are anticipating your defeat," the PM said at a rally in Bankura on the second day of his visit to the state.

Claiming that wall posters put up by the TMC showed Banerjee kicking at his head, Modi said if the Bengal CM wants, she can put her foot on his head and kick him but not the state's development and the dreams of people living here. "I saw Didi's men drawing pictures on walls where Didi is playing football with my head," he said, questioning why the TMC supremo was insulting the heritage and culture of Bengal.

The state has a long tradition of using wall etchings of cartoons and grafitti for political messaging.

Modi's attack is believed to be in backdrop of Mamata's slogan *Khela Hobe* (there will be a game) which she is raising in poll campaigns.

Modi's speech on Sunday centred around the CM as he hit out at her on several issues. "Didi, you have made only false announcements in the last 10 years. Had people known about your governance, they would not have elected you 10 years ago. You keep saying *Khela Hobe* when people have decided to *Khela Shesh Hobe* (the game will be over)," said Modi.

Reiterating the issues of cut-money and corruption, Modi said after wresting power, the BJP-led government will drag all those who are involved in the malpractice to the court of law.

The saffron camp has engaged its heavy artillery in south Bengal as Union Home Minister Amit Shah also addressed a rally in East Midnapore district and came down heavily on the Bengal CM. Hitting out at her on aunt-nephew issue, Shah said, "Corruption and cut-money have shattered the dreams of poor people in the state. The cut-money that your nephew earns reaches you too. The electorate of the state will give a befitting reply to you in the upcoming Assembly elections," said Shah.

FUEL FOR POLL HEAT

Trinamool Congress supporters campaign in Dum Dum ahead of Assembly polls on Sunday | PTI

201

polling stations to be completely managed by women in Assam's Cachar district

33%

Shah promises 33% quota for women in government services if the BJP comes to power in West Bengal

Saffron nominee shown black flag

Former Bengal minister and BJP's Assembly poll candidate from Domjur, Rajib Banerjee, was on Sunday shown black flags by TMC supporters in the constituency, when he was out campaigning from door to door with other activists of his party, police sources said. Several agitators, holding posters that referred to Banerjee as a "traitor", also blocked his way and raised slogans against him, prompting the police to mildly lathi-charge them, the sources said.

No car, land for NEDA leader

NEDA convenor and Assam finance minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has only ₹25,000 in cash, bank deposits of over ₹50 lakh, and no shares or insurance policies. In his affidavit submitted as a BJP candidate for the Assam polls from Jalukbari, Sarma declared that he does not own any immovable property, but has assets to the tune of ₹1.72 crore — up from ₹1.02 crore in 2016. His family income, has increased by more than ₹10 crore over the last five years

Steps on to attract women voters

The Nalbari district administration in Assam has taken several special measures to attract women voters during the upcoming Assembly election. The special measures include polling stations in which all the polling officials and security personnel will be women. All the top district administration official of Nalbari are women. The Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police, three additional deputy commissioners of the district are all women.

Mamata calls herself a donkey after Adhikari senior follows son into BJP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Kolkata

SHORTLY after Sisir Adhikari, TMC's Contai MP and father of Suvendu Adhikari, joined the BJP in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called herself a "donkey" for not recognising the "true face" of traitors defecting to the saffron camp.

Calling her once-trusted lieutenant Suvendu a traitor, Mamata, while addressing a rally in East Midnapore, said she has heard rumours that Adhikari family's empire is worth ₹5,000 crore.

"*Ami ekta boro gadha* (I am a big donkey). I failed to recognise the faces of these traitors.

Mamata Banerjee

Sisir Adhikari

I don't know, but people say their empire is worth ₹5,000 crore. I was not aware of it. They will use the money to buy votes. But don't vote for them," said Mamata.

The Bengal CM and Suvendu are engaged in a fierce battle as they are facing each other in Nandigram in East Midnapore from where the TMC turncoat was elected in 2016. Suvendu's father, who was vocal against Mamata and the TMC since his son changed his political alignment, shared the stage with Shah at Egra in the same district and joined the BJP. Suvendu's brother Dibyendu is a sitting TMC MP in Tamluk in East Midnapore.

Mamata vowed to probe the wealth of Adhikari family if she returns to power for the third consecutive term.

Hitting hard at the Adhikaris, Mamata said the family ruled the district like zamindars (landlords) by taking full control of the area. "Even I was not allowed to hold public meetings in the district. Now my party is free from the traitors and I can visit any place in East Midnapore," she said.

'Congress loot engine desperate to capture power in Assam'

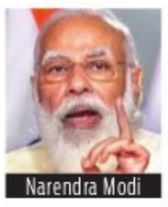
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Guwahati

STEPPING up attack on the Congress during his poll campaign in Assam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday termed the grand old party a "loot engine" which is desperate to come to power in the northeastern state "at any cost" to fill its "empty coffers".

Making fun of the guarantees given by Congress to the people if it is voted to power in Assam, Modi said the opposition party gave "false guarantees" of providing jobs and empowering women but did nothing when it was in power at the Centre and also in Assam at the same time earlier.

The Congress can go to any extent for coming to power and this is evident from the "lies" that they are spreading through their manifesto and the alliances they are entering to gain power, the Prime Minister said at an election rally in Bokakhat in Golaghat district.

"When there was a Congress government at the Centre and the state at the same time, there was double neglect, double corruption and double infiltration," he mockingly said. There was nobody to listen to the people either in Assam or at the Centre and now they should keep the "loot engine Congress" far away from them as the party only makes "false promises and gives false hopes to the poor," he said.



Narendra Modi

"The Congress is now giving guarantees... Their manifesto is guarantees of lies, of confusion, instability, bomb, *bandook aur* blockade (bomb, guns and blockades), insurgency and separatism, corruption and nepotism," Modi said.

"The party's coffers are empty and they want to come to power at any cost to fill it. They have no vision and *unke toh kursi hi dost hain* (the chair is the friend) and to attain that they can go to any extent," he added.

They have entered into alliances with the sole motive of coming to power. In West Bengal, they have entered into alliance with the Left and in Kerala they are fighting against them, he said to drive home the point. *With agency inputs*

'Modi sad about tweet by young activist, not flood-hit people'

Priyanka Gandhi at an election rally in Sivasagar district of Assam on Sunday | PTI

JORHAT (Assam): Launching a frontal attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday alleged he is sad about a tweet by a "22-year-old woman" but not for the flood-ravaged people of Assam.

A day after Modi raised the toolkit issue and alleged Congress conspiracy in it at a poll rally in Chabua in Assam, the daughter of late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, lamented that Modi was silent about people's suffering in perennial flood and "attack on culture" by the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Last year's flooding of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries during the pandemic affected some 2.8 million people in Assam.

"I was listening to the Prime Minister's speech yesterday. He very seriously said that he was very sad about a development. I thought he would speak about Assam's development or how BJP worked in Assam. But I was shocked to hear that the PM was talking about a tweet by a 22-year-old woman. He said the Congress conspired to finish the tea industry of Assam. He was also sad about the Congress mistakenly putting two wrong pictures on social media," Vadra said.

By "a 22-year-old woman", she apparently referred to climate activist Disha Ravi, who was arrested for allegedly being involved in sharing a "toolkit" on social media related to the farmers' protest. Ravi is now out on bail.

The Congress general secretary questioned Modi why he was not sad for the people affected by the flood and the anti-CAA movement, in which five youths were killed. "Why didn't you come to Assam when people were drowning? Why were you not sad when all the big promises by BJP were not fulfilled? Did you go to tea gardens and talk to workers about their problems?" *PTI*

Faculty and students will continue to question the world around them: Univ

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"ASHOKA has been privileged to have been led, guided and counselled by Pratap first as vice chancellor and then as senior faculty. Subramanian brought eminence, stature, fresh ideas and energy to the university and his exit leaves a void that will be hard to fill," the statement issued by the institution said. Mehta had stepped down as a vice chancellor two years back.

"Pratap and Arvind would like to emphasise that Ashoka University is one of the most important projects in Indian higher education. They are sad to be leaving Ashoka, especially its outstanding students and faculty. They continue to believe strongly that Ashoka University should embody a liberal vision and commitment to academic freedom and autonomy. And they remain lifelong friends and well-wishers of the institution and are committed to its success wherever they are," said the joint statement. In a separate letter, Board of Trustee chairperson Ashish Dhawan said faculty and students were encouraged to continue questioning the world around them, including the university.

> **Your (students) voice would make Ashoka a better university. Your outpouring is already a victory. You have taught us by example, what we were badly trying to teach you by lectures**
>
> PB Mehta

The students at the institution called for a two-day boycott of classes starting Monday. Mehta in his letter said he would want to close the chapter. "The underlying circumstances that led to the resignation will not change for the foreseeable future, in my case, at any rate. So I must close this chapter. I urge you not to press on this matter. I know you will be disappointed. But if I may exercise one last bit of professorial discretion: your mission is larger than the fate of two Professors," Mehta wrote.

SUPREME COURT

None of 23 IITs following quota policy, says plea

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @New Delhi

A plea has been moved in the Supreme Court alleging that all 23 Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) are violating reservation policy that provides reservation to SC/ST communities and OBCs in admission to research programmes and recruitment of faculty.

The plea filed by geothermal energy researcher Dr Sachchida Nand Pandey has contended that the process of admissions in research programmes and appointment of faculty members by all the IITs is completely unconstitutional.

In 2019, Government of India had extended reservation to all posts in all streams for faculty position. However, the IITs are completely violating the reservation policy, it has been claimed. The plea has further said that IITs never reveal the standards set by them for recruiting its faculty members and candidates are also kept in dark about the same. The petitioner has sought a direction to all IITs to implement the reservation policy.

Oppn steps up pressure on govt; MNS seeks Deshmukh sacking

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Mumbai

FOLLOWING the sensational claim of former Mumbai Police Commissioner Parambir Singh that Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh had asked Sachin Waze and other police officials to collect ₹100 crore a month from hotels and bars, opposition BJP has upped the ante against the Maha Vikas Aghadi government.

BJP held demonstrations in nearly 200 places in the state on Sunday demanding the resignation of Deshmukh and probe into the claim made by Singh in his letter to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray. Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis called for a judicial inquiry. State BJP president Chandrakant Patil said protests would continue until Deshmukh steps down. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena president Raj Thackeray also demanded the resignation of Deshmukh.

A senior NCP leader, Deshmukh has denied the charges. State NCP chief Jayant Patil said the home minister has no reason to resign because of a yet unsubstantiated claim. He, however, added that a probe should be done to find out the truth. Days before writing to Thackeray, Singh was removed as commissioner and made in charge of a less important department.

BJP activists stage a protest against Home MInister Anil Deshmukh over the revelations of former Mumbai police commissioner in Thane on Sunday | PTI

ATS arrests two in Mansukh murder case

The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has arrested two persons, including a policeman, in connection with the alleged murder of businessman Mansukh Hiran

"We demand that Deshmukh be sacked immediately and not brought back until a fair inquiry is done. Unless the home minister resigns, a fair inquiry will not be carried out. In Singh's letter, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, CM Thackeray and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar have been mentioned. But the CM is not speaking on this matter," Fadnavis said.

Patil defended Deshmukh. "This is nothing but diversion tactics by the Opposition in the Mansukh Hiren death case," he said.

FIR REGISTERED

'Non-Hindus not allowed' banners in 150 temples

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Dehradun

THE Uttarakhand state police on Sunday registered an FIR against members of a right wing outfit after banners came up in more than 150 temples in Dehradun saying that entry of non-Hindus is banned in the premises. The banners were allegedly raised by Hindu Yuva Vahini. The outfit members have been booked under Section 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race etc.) of the Indian Penal Code

The banners read, "*Yeh teertha Hinduo ka pavitra sthal hai, ismein gair Hinduo ka pravesh varjit hai.* (This site is a holy place for Hindus, the entry of non-Hindus is prohibited)."

The Vahini is not the same founded by UP CM, Yogi Adityanath, said the members associated with the group in Uttarakhand. The incident happened days after a teenage boy from the Muslim community was assaulted for drinking tap water at the Dasna Devi temple in Dasna (Ghaziabad).

INDIGENOUS SCHOOL

Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu has inaugurated the state's first formal indigenous language and knowledge system school in East Kameng district. The first-of-its-kind school is called 'Nyubu Nyvgam Yerko'

3 KIDS KILLED AS HEAP OF SOIL FALL ON THEM IN RAJ

INDIA	Max	Min	INDIA	Max	Min
Ahmedabad	38	24	Mumbai	34	26
Bhopal	34	20	Panaji	32	23
Jaipur	35	22	Patna	38	22
Amritsar	25	17	Lucknow	36	23
Chennai	33	25	Port Blair	33	26
Kolkata	37	24	Imphal	33	10
Srinagar	14	07	Chandigarh	33	19

THAT LONG WALK, A YEAR ON

It was exactly a year ago, on March 22, that 'Janata Curfew' was imposed — a precursor to lockdown announced two days later that triggered a mass migration of the scale that India had not seen since Independence. Their livelihoods snatched in a single stroke, voiceless millions trod back home battling multitude of odds. *TNIE* revisits stories of some migrants, who made headlines back then for their sheer misery or extraordinary fortitude, to find how they or their families are doing.

RAJASTHAN

RAJESH ASNANI @Jaipur

AMID the tragic tales of labourers forced to walk hundreds of miles to reach home, a village in Rajasthan witnessed something different.

A group of 54 labourers were provided shelter in a government school in Palsana village in Rajasthan's Sikar district. In return for the hospitality of the locals, the labourers who lived there for over a month painted the school building. This token of gratitude won the hearts of the villagers, who continue to feel a special bond with those visitors a year on.

From Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, they were working as agricultural labourers in Jhunjhunu district when the lockdown was announced.

They were asked to isolate themselves in the school building. During the 34 days they were there, locals provided them good arrangements.

Rajendra Kumar Meena, school principal, remembers that their 'guests' started with cleaning the campus and then came to him asking for work that would be remembered after they were gone. Meena told them the school had not been painted for 10 years. The labourers wasted no time in saying they were game. "My colleagues agreed to fund a few buckets of paint. We bought other materials. But for their free labour, our school would have remained in the same terrible shape it was in for over a decade," says Meena.

Sarpanch of Palsana, Roop Singh Shekhawat, remembers that local ADM Ashok Rinwa suddenly asked them to make arrangements for the workers at the school.

Everyone pitched in despite the atmosphere of fear about the Covid at that time. Before the migrants left, a farewell was organised. They were gifted clothes, blankets and 'safas' (turbans).

In return for hospitality, labourers who lived there for over a month during lockdown painted the school building | EXPRESS

MADHYA PRADESH

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bhopal

IT has been more than 10 months since 16 migrant workers hailing from Madhya Pradesh were crushed to death by a freight train in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district on May 8, 2020 — in possibly the worst tragedy in the country during the lockdown. Some of the bereaved families in Shahdol and Umaria districts say they are still waiting for the death certificates of their kin.

All the 16 labourers, who worked at steel factories in Maharashtra's Jalna town, had lost their jobs amid the lockdown and decided to return home on foot on May 7 evening, after missing the Shramik Special train.

After walking for 40-odd km, these workers started feeling tired and sat on a track between Karnad and Badnapur railway stations for taking some rest. They gradually went into a deep sleep. At 5.22 am, the train ran over them.

Middle-aged farmer Ashok Singh's not only lost his brother Dhan Singh, 26, and only son Dipak Singh, but also three young cousins in the tragedy. "Our village Antauli in Shahdol district lost nine sons, out of which five were from our family," says Singh.

"We have got compensation of ₹13 lakh for each but are yet to receive their death certificates till date. Recently, we met the officials, including the SDM and tehsildar, who have assured us that we will soon get the death certificates," Singh says.

He says although widows have been receiving the monthly pension based on the post mortem reports, they fear that the houses promised to them under the Prime Minister Housing Scheme by the Shahdol district collector and other benefits under other government schemes may get stuck in the absence of death certificates. "With 1.5-acre ancestral land being divided among my relatives, there would be hardly any land left for me," Singh adds.

In the adjoining Umaria district's Jamudi village, Krishnavati Singh, mother of two, lost her husband Munim Singh in the tragedy. Overall, five people from the village had died in the mishap. "We have received the compensation but still waiting for my husband's death certificate. The Umaria district collector had come to our village on the day of the incident and announced that we would get a house under the PM Awas Yojana. How will we get the benefits if we are not provided with the certificate?" she asks.

Farmer Ashok Singh lost his brother and only son in Aurangabad tragedy | EXPRESS

JHARKHAND

MUKESH RANJAN @Ranchi

DHANANJAY Kumar Hembrom, a resident of Jharkhand's Godda who had hit headlines for showing extraordinary courage in helping his pregnant wife chase her dreams of becoming a school teacher and covered a distance of over 1,200 km up to Gwalior in MP on a rickety scooter in September last year, is struggling to make ends meet.

Working as a waiter at a restaurant in Godda, Dhananjay, 27, now finds it difficult to fulfil the requirement of his wife Soni Hembrom, 22, and their three-month-old child. As there has been no option left to increase his income at home in the time of the pandemic, Dhananjay has decided to go back to Ahmedabad on March 14 to work as a cook at a private yarn factory there.

"Initially, I thought that I would never leave my family alone and took the job of a waiter at a local restaurant. But later, I realised that it is very difficult to manage the family with the salary I am getting here," says Dhananjay.

Soni had enrolled herself with the MP Board of Secondary Education in 2019 as the fee there was much less than that in Jharkhand. Dhananjay, was working as a cook with a private firm in Gujarat and had to spend his savings of ₹30,000 to return home.

When the exam dates were announced in September, Soni mortgaged whatever ornaments she had to arrange money for travel. But the couple learnt that it was not enough for a train or bus ticket. Undeterred, they finally set out on their scooter.

Dhananjay Kumar Hembrom, wife Soni with their newborn baby | EXPRESS

Unfortunately, Soni could not clear the English paper. The couple recently went to Gwalior for her re-examination after local MLA Deepika Pandey bore their travel expenses.

"This time, my wife is quite sure that she will get through the examination and secure a diploma," says Dhananjay.

An 'Atmanirbhar Bharat tea stall set up in Begusarai district | EXPRESS

BIHAR

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @Patna

THERE'S no obstacle or challenge in life that the human spirit cannot conquer. A dozen-odd men from Bihar's Begusarai district showed such spirit when they refused to let the loss of livelihood and the spectre of an uncertain future bog them down and instead decided to go 'Atmanirbhar'.

Like other migrants, they also were forced to return to their village, Kalyanpur, when the lockdown was imposed. But they chose to make a fresh start once the restrictions started being eased. Refusing to go back to the heartless cities that had turned them away in their worst hours of crisis, they opened 'Atmanirbhar' stalls in the village itself.

"A year is to be completed of the lockdown. But we have not forgotten till what we had faced. Now, we will not go outside the state and have decided to become self-reliant," said Rohan Kumar.

Niraj Kumar Singh has set up an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat tea stall while Uma Kumar has opened a grocery store.

Tipu Singh, Budhan Sah, Subhash Singh, Govind Kumar, Praksh Kumar, all aged between 35 and 45, have also refused to return to other states for livelihood. Having learnt their lessons, these men say they find self-employment the best option.

Dipak Kumar, a daily wager in Punjab earlier, now runs an outlet for eggs and snacks while Rajaram Saha, who used to sell vegetables in Delhi, has now become 'Atmanirbhar sabji vikreta (vegetable seller) in Kalyanpur block.

Jyoti Kumari, who had cycled from Gurugram with her injured father, at her house now | EXPRESS

BIHAR

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @Patna

AMID myriad tales of miseries, hers was a story of extraordinary grit. Jyoti Paswan, 17, still shudders when she hears the word 'lockdown'. But her act of courage — of cycling over 1,200 km carrying her ailing father from Gurugram to home in Bihar's Darbhanga district on May 16 — earned her worldwide acclaim and a lot of help that has changed her life, giving hope of a brighter future.

Thanks to the financial aid that poured in, the poverty-stricken Dalit family — her father is still unemployed — now lives a pucca house with various facilities. Once forced to drop out due to poverty, Jyoti was enrolled in school again by the district administration and gave her Class X exam this year. She hopes to study further and become "well-educated and independent".

A recipient of the Pradhan Mantri Bal Puruskar for her determination and bravery, Jyoti says it was a golden moment for her when PM Narendra Modi called out her name. However, she still says what she did was a compulsion and wishes that "no one else ever faces" such a situation.

UTTAR PRADESH

Mohammad Saiyub (L) with fellow worker Amrit Kumar | FILE

NAMITA BAJPAI @Lucknow

REMEMBER the photograph — of a man lying unconscious in the lap of a friend frantically trying to revive him — which flashed across TV channels last year as desperate labourers returned home from different parts of the country?

It was May 14, 2020. Suffering from fever and breathing problem, Amrit Kumar, 24, was offloaded from a truck he had boarded in Surat in Gujarat to return to his village Deori in Basti district of Uttar Pradesh. He was eventually taken to hospital, but died a day later.

Fearing that he had contracted the deadly coronavirus, fellow travellers dumped him on the road in Shivpuri in MP and moved on, but Amrit's friend-cum-fellow worker Mohammad Saiyub refused to desert him. Both had paid ₹4,000 each to get on the truck that was carrying 60 others. "The truck driver asked me to carry on and leave Amrit behind. My conscience did not permit that," recollects Saiyub. "He did not have Covid. Both of us had tested negative."

Saiyub returned to Deori with Amrit's body. His friend was the lone bread winner of his family, which is now struggling to make ends meet. Saiyub is not doing great either, but his family refuses to allow him to go back to Surat. Working at a weaving unit, Amrit and Siayub lost their jobs during the lockdown. "We lived in the same tenement in Surat. Amrit had helped me during my early days there," says Saiyub.

Although he wants to, Saiyub is unable to help Amrit's family due to his meager earnings. Amrit's old father works on a tiny plot of land. "His father suffers from sciatica and has difficulty walking. His younger brother is a teenager and of the five sisters, only one is married," says Saiyub.

"Amrit's father works on his land and manages at least one meal per day for his family," rues Saiyub, who has started a business of making grills and windows. "In Surat, I used to earn ₹17,000-18,000 a month. Here, ₹3,000-4,000 is difficult," says Saiyub.

Centre issues Covid advisory to UT administration

The Union Health Ministry has flagged Chandigarh as one of the districts of concern in 12 states after Covid cases more than doubled in the city from 49 on March 1 to 111 on March 15, which is an increase of 56%. The ministry has asked the Administration to focus on Covid-19-appropriate behaviour. Also, all close contracts of positive patients should be tested, traced and isolated in 72 hours. The ministry has also advised the administration to increase its vaccination coverage to 100 per cent besides identifying the clusters.

HARPREET BAJWA
Our correspondent in Chandigarh
hsbajwa73@gmail.com

CHANDIGARH DIARY

Youth leaders programme underway in two districts

The Punjab Youth Leaders Programme (PYLP) is currently going on in the districts of Patiala and Fatehgarh Sahib with 20 young leaders covering 1,400 schools and meeting 97,000 children. The programme is for young and dynamic change-makers who are passionate about education, policy, governance and wish to work at the grassroots level to bring systemic reforms in public systems. The young leaders will also get an opportunity to join a community of future leaders and access a network of mentors working across fields in India and abroad. More applications have been invited for the two-year leadership development programme, which enables young leaders to work towards improving the quality of education in government primary schools of Punjab.

Cycling policy to incentivise employees

The Chandigarh Smart City Limited has prepared a policy in order to encourage cycling in the city. It envisages priority to cyclists in traffic, parking spaces to cycles in offices and dedicated underpasses for cyclists. Employees who come on cycles will get half day leave for every seven days they cycle and commendation certificates. Also, awards will be given by government departments to employees who come on cycle to office, besides monetary benefits. Private sector companies, too, will be encouraged to give similar incentives.

7 firms show interest in land-lease project

Seven companies participated in the first pre-bid meeting over the leasing of vacant land parcels for mixed-use development as part of Chandigarh railway station redevelopment project which was conducted by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited (IRSDC). The firms included Eldeco, Dr Group, Virtuous Retail South Asia, Kalpataru Power Transmission Limited and Omaxe Limited. "Chandigarh railway station will be developed into a world class transport hub to offer superior travel experience to passengers," said SK Lohia, MD of IRSDC.

4 schools
reconstructed with Indian assistance inaugurated in Nepal on Sunday

GLOBAL WEATHER
LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

Beijing	19	-4	SNY	Los Angeles	24	8	SNY
Colombo	32	23	TDS	Melbourne	24	16	TDS
Dhaka	28	16	SNY	Moscow	-8	-15	LC
Dubai	26	17	SNY	New York	3	-4	LC
Houston	20	9	SNY	Singapore	32	24	TDS
Istanbul	16	7	LC	Toronto	2	-9	LC
London	13	4	LC	Washington	13	-1	LC

1 SHOT DEAD IN MYANMAR, TWO AUSTRALIANS DETAINED

Australian couple apprehended while trying to leave the violence-hit Asian country

YANGON

SECURITY forces in Myanmar shot dead an anti-coup protester on Sunday in the central city of Monywa and at least two people were injured in a clash with security forces, two witnesses told AFP

"I saw people carrying a man who was shot and killed," a local resident told reporters, adding that the body was taken to a local hospital.

"They used stun grenades and tear gas... later they started shooting. I don't know if the man, who died on the spot after he was hit on his head, was killed from rubber bullets or live rounds," he said.

The Australian government confirmed it is assisting two nationals who were detained after trying to leave Yangon.

Australia's foreign ministry confirmed on Sunday it was providing consular assistance to them.

"Due to our privacy obligations we will not provide further detail," a spokeswoman said. It is understood business consultants Matthew O'Kane and Christa Avery, a dual Canadian-Australian citizen, are under house arrest after trying to leave the country on a relief flight on Friday. The couple run a bespoke consultancy business in Yangon. A third Australian, economist Sean Turnell, an advisor to Suu Kyi, who was arrested a week after the putsch also remains in custody.

Relatives attend the funeral of teenager Aung Kaung Htet who was shot by the Myanmar security forces amid this week's anti-coup protests | AFP

Weekend violence failed to deter hundreds of doctors and nurses donning hard hats and brandishing posters of Suu Kyi as they marched at dawn through Mandalay, Myanmar's second-largest city and cultural capital. Mandalay has been the scene of some of the worst violence from police and soldiers since the coup and local media said the rally was staged at dawn to evade security forces.

The protests came a day after a local monitoring group confirmed the killing of four protesters at the hands of security forces around the country.

Two of the deaths were in Yangon, the country's commercial hub, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP). *AFP*

DISPUTED

Philippines ask Chinese 'militia' boats to leave reef

MANILA

THE Philippine defence chief on Sunday demanded more than 200 Chinese vessels he said were manned by militias leave a South China Sea reef claimed by Manila, saying their presence was a "provocative action of militarising the area."

"We call on the Chinese to stop this incursion and immediately recall these boats violating our maritime rights and encroaching into our sovereign territory," Lorenzana said in a statement, adding without elaborating that the Philippines would uphold its sovereign rights.

A government watchdog overseeing the disputed region said about 220 Chinese vessels were seen moored at Whitsun Reef, which Beijing also claims, on March 7.

It released pictures of the vessels side by side in one of the most hotly contested areas of the strategic waterway.

The reef, which Manila calls Julian Felipe, is a boomerang-shaped and shallow coral region about 324 kilometers west of Bataraza town in the western Philippine province of Palawan.

EXPRESS READ

Mass evacuation as Oz dam overflows

Sydney: Sydney braced for its worst flooding in decades on Sunday after record rain caused its largest dam to overflow and as deluges prompted mandatory mass evacuation orders along Australia's east coast. Emergency services ordered people living in low-lying areas on the city's north-western fringes to flee to safety, as authorities warned of a potentially "life-threatening" situation in New South Wales. It came after the Warragamba Dam spilled over Saturday afternoon—causing officials to warn the downstream Hawkesbury River was expected to peak at levels not seen since 1961. AFP

US defence secy makes surprise visit to Kabul

KABUL

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin made an unannounced visit to Afghanistan on Sunday just weeks before Washington is due to withdraw the last of its troops under a deal struck with the Taliban last year. After talks with President Ashraf Ghani Sunday, Austin would not be drawn for comment on the deadline.

"That's the domain of my boss," he told reporters. "That's the... decision that the President (Biden) will make at some point in time, in terms of how he wants to approach this going forward," he said. Under the deal thrashed out between the Taliban and Washington, the insurgents pledged also to engage in peace talks with Afghan government negotiators, but they have made almost no progress and fighting has only worsened. *AFP*

Thousands protest new Europe lockdowns

LONDON

THOUSANDS of protesters angry at Covid-19 restrictions rallied in cities across Europe on Saturday as several nations reimposed partial lockdowns to fight new surges in infections.

The coronavirus, which has killed more than 2.7 million people, has been spreading faster recently, with the number of new infections up globally by 14 per cent in the last week, according to AFP.

That has forced governments to impose social distancing and movement restrictions again, even as vaccines are rolled out, with residents in Poland, parts of France, and Ukraine's capital the latest to face fresh curbs.

But populations have grown increasingly weary of the economically painful restrictions, and frustrations spilled over in cities across Europe with thousands marching in Germany, Britain and Switzerland.

Demonstrators in the German city of Kassel held up signs including "End the Lockdown" and "Corona Rebels", as they participated in a protest organised by activists from both the far-left and the far-right, as well as peddlers of baseless conspiracy theories about the pandemic and vaccines.

Authorities used water cannon, batons and pepper spray to disperse the Kassel protesters, which a Kassel police spokesman said numbered between 15,000 and 20,000—one of the largest such rallies so far this year. There were also anti-restrictions protests in Amsterdam, Vienna, the Bulgarian capital of Sofia, and the Swiss town of Liestal. *AFP*

People attend a protest against government restrictions to curb the spread of the coronavirus, in London on Saturday | AP

Spring-breakers prompt state of emergency in Miami

THRONGS of revelers flocking to Miami Beach for spring break have become so uncontrollable that authorities declared a state of emergency on Saturday and imposed a curfew meant to quash the party. The move marks the second year in a row that fun has been curtailed at the popular spring break destination—last March because the pandemic was just ramping up and this year due to unruly and destructive crowds. Authorities announced on Saturday that visitors must be off the street and that restaurants would close their doors at 8 pm in South Beach, the epicenter of the city's nightlife, following an increase of violence and vandalism over recent days. "It kind of sucks," said John Perez, a student from Texas having beers with a group of friends on the sand, despite police efforts to prevent alcohol consumption on the beach.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public are hereby informed that my Client **M/s. Star Granites** represented by its Partners 1. Mr. Nazeer Ahmed, S/o. Abdul Jabbar 2. Mr. Rafeeq Ahmed, S/o. Abdul Jabbar 3. Mr. Zameer Ahmed, S/o. Abdul Jabbar, have approached the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board to execute the Sale deed in respect of immovable Property, more fully described in the Schedule here under and herein after referred to as "Schedule Property". Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board in its letter No. KIADB/AA/TUM/1167/2020-21 dated 14.09.2020 have requested to furnish the any one of - Aadhaar Card, Passport Copy, Election Card, Tahsildhar Certificate etc in respect of following persons **1.** Mr. Noorulla, S/o. Ameer Ulla Khan **2.** Mr. Anwar Ali Khan and his wife and children **3.** Mr. Shafee Ulla Khan and his wife and children **4.** Mrs. Mumtaz Begaum **5.** Mr. Nazeerulla Khan and his wife and children **6.** Mr. Jehar Bee and Mr. Ajaskhan and their family **7.** Mrs. Jeenath Begaum and children Mr. Yasmeen refeeq, Mr. Sameen Arkhanam, Mr. Syfeulla Khan and Mr.Ameer Arkhanam **8.** Mr. Noor Ulla and Mrs. Beebi Jan **9.** Mr. Muneer and Mrs. Jameela **10.**Mrs.Mumtaj and Mr. Mahaboob Basha **11.**Mr.Najeer Ahmed S/o Abdul Jabbar **12.** Mr. Rafeeq Ahmed S/o Abdul Jabbar, to enable to execute the absolute Sale deed. In the above connection, if any person including above persons having any right, title interest or claim in the Schedule property or any part thereof, or having any claim on or against the Schedule property or the documents thereof or objecting to such sale should lodge their objections and/ or claims in writing along with the documentary proof for asserting his/her/their rights with regard to the Schedule Property or any part thereof with the undersigned within **15 days** from the date of publication of this Notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on our clients and presumed that the aforesaid property is free from any acts of encumbrances or claims.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Property bearing KIADB Plot No.64 measuring 1000 Sq. Meters (25 X 40 Meters), Part of Survey No.28, Situated at Antharasanahalli Industrial Area, II Phase, Kasaba Hobli, Tumkur, together with buildings and Structure already constructed and to be constructed thereon with all standard fixtures and fittings is bounded as follows: **East by :** KIADB Land. **West by:**KIADB 12.20 Meters Road. **North by:** KIADB Road No.14/A. **South by:** Plot No.65.

M. KALASHREE
Advocate and Legal Consultants
No. 29, 3rd Cross, Vinayaka Laycut
Bhoopasandra, Bangalore - 560094
Telephone 080-41522496
Email: kalashreem@gmail.com
Date: 20.03.2021 Place: Bengaluru.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client **SMT. NIRMALA,** aged about 43 years, W/o Nataraj.M.G Residing at : No.No.78(V), 4th Cross, Pai Layout, Opp Food World Godown, Hulimavu B.G.Road, Bangalore-560076 wish to purchase agricultural land bearing Old Sy No.88 New Sy No.88/1, measuring 09 Guntas and land bearing Old Sy No.88 New Sy No.88/2, measuring 22 Guntas both are situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District from its owner **SRI. Dr. C.R. MANOHAR,** aged about 41years, S/o Sri.P.Rangaswamy, Residing at : No.36, 'G.L.Residancy', Bagalur Main Road, Sarjapura Post, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore-562125 who has a clear and marketable title to the Schedule Property.

Any person/s who claims any right, title or mortgage or charge or interest of any nature in relation to the Schedule property and/or has objections of any nature to the proposed transaction should lodge such claims and/or objections in writing to the undersigned together with supporting documents within 7 (Seven) days from the date of this notice, failing which it will be deemed that no valid claims or objections subsist and our client would proceed to complete the transaction with the present owner by entering into sale deed in their name subject to compliance with other statutory and legal formalities.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ITEM-I: All that piece and parcel of the agricultural land bearing Old Sy No.88 New Sy No.88/1, measuring 09 Guntas situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the:

East : Property belongs to Kalamunaiah's Narayanareddy,
West : Property belongs to Chikka Narayanareddy,
North : Property belongs to Agasara Giriyappa,
South : Property belongs to Kondareddy.

ITEM-II: All that piece and parcel of the agricultural land bearing Old Sy No.88 New Sy No.88/2, measuring 22 Guntas situated at Sarjapura Village, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, and bounded on the:

East : Property belongs to Sri. Khaji Abdul Shukoor,
West : Property belongs to Dr.C.R.Manohar,
North : Property belongs to Sri. Srinivasa Reddy, Sri.Chandra Reddy and Sri.Nanjundappa
South : Property belongs to Kondareddy.

R.SURENDRA NATH BENARJY, Advocate, #14 & 15, 2nd Cross, Kodandarama Reddy layout, Ramamurthy Nagar, Bangalore–16. Mobile - 9845784151

TAMILNADU MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.
(A Government of Tamilnadu Undertaking)
No.417, Pantheon Road, Chennai-600 008. Phone: 044-2819 1890, 2819 0259
Mobile: 09940188236, Website: www.tnmsc.tn.gov.in , E-Mail: mngrpurdrug.tnmsc@tn.gov.in

Sealed Tenders are invited for the supply of **Veterinary Drugs** by TNMSC Ltd., Chennai-600008, from the Manufacturers or Direct Importer or Loan Licensees having Valid Loan License having three years Market Standing.

Tender Reference No.	002/M(P)/VET-DRUG/ TNMSC/2021, Dated 22.03.2021
Tender Document Sale Period	22.03.2021 to 21.04.2021
Last Date and Time for receipt of tender	22.04.2021 upto 10.30 AM

The tender document can be downloaded from the websites of www.tnmsc.tn.gov.in and www.tenders.tn.gov.in on free of cost.

DIPR/ 1452 /Tender/2021 **General Manager (Drugs)**

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client is desirous of purchasing the Schedule Property morefully described in the Schedule here below from **M/s. AKARSHA REALTY PRIVATE LIMITED,** A Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956, having its Registered Office at No.10, Vittal Mallya Road, Bangalore-560001. If any person(s) has/have any rights, claims or interest in the Schedule Property or any objections whatsoever to the said transaction, the same may be communicated to the undersigned within **7 days** from date of this notice with documentary proof in support thereof, failing which, my client shall assume that there are no such rights, claims, interest (s) or objections and shall proceed to finalise the transaction as advised.

Sl. No.	Sy. No.	Extent	Conversion Order No.	Boundaries
Gunjur Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk				
1.	76/1	02 Acres 04 Guntas and 03 Guntas kharab	ALN(E.V.H)SR 339/2008-09 dated 8/4/2011, issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore	E: Government Road & land bearing Sy.No.72; W: Lands bearing Sy.No.77 and Sy.No.81; N : Land bearing Sy.No.82 S : Land bearing Sy.No.76/2.
2.	82	09 Guntas and 01 Gunta kharab	ALN(E.V.H)SR 589/ 2011-12 dated 27/04/2012 issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Bangalore District, Bangalore	E : Land bearing Sy No.71; W : Land bearing Sy No.81 and Lake; N : Kere Angala; S : Land bearing Sy No.76.

G.V. Sudhakar, Advocate
No.3, 4, 5 & 8, First Floor, Abhayashrama Complex, 4th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bangalore-27.Ph : 080-42194390, 9886359644
Bangalore Date : 22-03-2021

PUBLIC NOTICE

Under the instruction of my Client **Shri. Ganesh Bandaru S/o Late B N Rao,** ageod about 60 years, Residing at 16034, Prestige Shanthinikethan, Hoodi Road, whitefield, Bangalore-560048.

Hereby, it is brought to the public notice, that my client is absolute owner of the below said schedule property, due to my clients illness he was not able to attend matter related to Revenue, Governament offices related to the schedule property on 28/03/2017, He executed the General Power of Attorney in favour of one **Smt. M V Nagarathna W/o Shri A S Bheemappa,** aged about 68 years residing at No 16/2, West Anjaneya Temple Street, Bengaluru-56004 and the same was notarized before one Shri C Rangaiah (Revenue Bengaluru).

Now my client is able to attend all part of his works himself, hence my client herewith cancelled this power of attorney executed to aforesaid Smt. M V Nagarathna on 28/03/2017 with immediate effect of publishing this public notice. Hereby public cautioned not to deal with the attorney in Respect of below said my clients schedule property.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the Non converted immovable property measuring 20 Guntas, situated in Sy No 12, apportioned out of the 8 Acres 21 Guntas available in Sy No 12 of Gubbalala village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, bounded by;

East by : Singapore Garden
West by : BWSSB Property
North by : Property belonging to Mr. Bheemappa
South by : Property belonging to Mr. A B Narendra

ADVOCATE
K.L. Lakshminarayana
Office at No.2382, 2383/2A,
Near Railway gate K.G.Koppal,
Mysuru - 570014 Mob: 9445150499

Date: 21.03.2021
Place: Bengaluru

KARNATAKA GRAMIN BANK
(A Scheduled Bank owned by Government of India: Sponsored by: Canara Bank)
Regional Office, Bengaluru – 560072 Karnataka
221, Manju Mansions, 6th block, 2nd stage, 80 feet ring road, Opp BWSSB Office, Nagarabhavi, Bangalore – 560 072
R & L Section Ph: 080-23186095,23217079 : Email:br2504@kgbk.in

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Properties)

Whereas, the undersigned being the **Authorized Officer of Karnataka Gramin Bank,** under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notices calling upon the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, Notice is hereby given to the Borrowers / Guarantor / Mortgagors and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession on the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on mentioned dates. The Borrowers in particular and the Public in General are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charges of the **Karnataka Gramin Bank ,** for the amount interest and Other Charges mentioned below.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

1) Name of the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors:(1) Sri. K.Anjaneyalu S/o Kannaiah **(2) Sri. Muralikrishna** S/o K.Anjaneyalu Both are R/at No.1542/41, 1st floor, South end, B cross, 9th block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560069 **(3) Sri. B.N.Mohan Kumar** S/o S.Narasimhalu (Guarantor) R/at No.148, Manjunath Road, T K Nagar, 2nd block, Thyagaraj Nagar, Bengaluru-560028.

Branch : Banashankari **Demand notice dated :17.08.2019** **Possession notice dated : 16.03.2021**

Outstanding Amount : Rs.10,97,780/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Ninety Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty Only) as on **25.02.2021** and interest from **26.02.2021.**

Description Of The Immovable Property: All that part and parcel of the property is having Site No.109, Gottigere Assessment No.130, Gramathana Khatha No.782, BBMP Khatha No.782/130/109 measuring E-W-(64+57)/2 feet N-S-(79+65)/2 feet totally 4356 Sq Ft situated at Gottigere Grama, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru South Taluk, Bengaluru. This Property is in the name of **Sri.K.Anjaneyalu S/o Kannaiah.** Bounded On the East by : Road, On the West by : Private Property, On the North by : Private Property & Road, On the South by : Private Property.

2) Name of the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors: (1) Sri. Dharman K S/o Kolandi Swamy R/at No.42, 5th Cross, Srinivas Nagar, Pattegarapalya Road, Nagarbhavi, Bengaluru-560072 **(2) Sri.Tulasikrishna** S/o Salavaiah (Guarantor) R/at No.455, 2nd Main Road, 10th Block, Nagarbhavi 2nd stage, Bengaluru-560072.

Branch : Banashankari **Demand notice dated :10.11.2020** **Possession notice dated : 16.03.2021**

Outstanding Amount : Rs.12,77,149/- (Rupees Twelve Lakh Seventy Seven Thousand One Hundred Forty Nine Only) as on **05.03.2021** and interest from **06.03.2021.**

Description Of The Immovable Property: All that part and parcel of the property is having residential site No.A-2, Assessment No.42, PID No.103-96-A-2 measuring E-W-45 feet N-S-20 feet totally measuring 900 Sq Ft situated at Pattegarapalya Road, Bangalore. This Property is in the name of **Sri.Dharman K s/o Kolandi Swamy.** Bounded On the East by :Road, On the West by : Property No.A-3, On the North by : Others property, On the South by : Halla.

3) Name of the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors: (1) Sri.Nanjundappa S/o Yellabhovi R/at No.398, Shanthipura, Anekal Taluk, Sarjapura Hobli, Huskur Post, Bangalore-560099. **(2) Smt.Yashodamma** W/o Nanjundappa (Guarantor) R/at No.398, Shanthipura, Anekal Taluk, Sarjapura Hobli, Huskur Post, Bangalore-560099.

Branch : Banashankari **Demand notice dated : 23.09.2019** **Possession notice dated : 16.03.2021**

Outstanding Amount : Rs.19,68,669/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Sixty Eight Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Nine Only) as on **26.02.2021** and interest from **27.02.2021** for the **A/c No. 42210130000116 & Rs.3,80,308/- (Rupees Three Lakhs Eighty Thousand Three Hundred and Eight Only) as on 26.02.2021** and interest from **27.02.2021 for the A/c No. 12210130000046 .**

Description Of The Immovable Property: All that part and parcel of the property is having Property No.144 & 145 & Khatha No.176 measuring E-W:80 feet N-S: 70 feet totally 5600 Sq Ft situated at Chikkanagamangala, Sarjapura Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru. This Property is in the name of **Sri.Nanjundappa S/o Yellabhovi.** Bounded On the East by : 30 Ft Road, On the West by : Sy.No.146, On the North by : 40 Ft Road, On the South by : Remaining portion of same property.

4) Name of the Borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors: (1) Sri.Ravishankar B N S/o Nanjundappa R/at No.231, 2nd Main, 5th Cross, Panchasheela Nagar, Mudalapalya, Bengaluru-560072 **(2)Sri.Neeranjan Murthy** S/o Nanjundappa (Guarantor) R/at No.231, 2nd Main, 5th Cross, Panchasheela Nagar, Mudalapalya, Bengaluru-560072.

Branch : Banashankari **Demand notice dated : 10.11.2020** **Possession notice dated : 16.03.2021**

Outstanding Amount : Rs.15,51,982/- (Rupees Fifteen Lakh Fifty One Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Two Only) as on 26.02.2021 and interest from **27.02.2021.**

Description Of The Immovable Property: All that part and parcel of the property is having Site No.231 formed in Sy.No.52, measuring E-W:30 feet N-S: 40 feet totally 1200 Sq Ft situated at Malagalu (v), Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, BBMP Amarjyothinagara ward No.127, 2nd main road, Bengaluru. This Property is in the name of **Sri.Ravishankar B N S/o Nanjundappa.** Bounded On the East by : Road, On the West by :Site No.230, On the North by : Site No.229, On the South by : Site No.233.

Date : 16.03.2021
Place : Bengaluru

Sd/- Authorised Officer
KARNATAKA GRAMIN BANK

ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL PROTECTING INVESTING FINANCING ADVISING

ADITYA BIRLA HOUSING FINANCE LTD

Registered Office: Indian Rayon Compound, Veraval, Gujarat 362 266.
Branch Office: Bengaluru Branch : Star Avenue, 1(78), 3rd Floor, 6th Cross, Victoria Layout, Victoria Road, Beside Vijaya Bank, Bengaluru - 560025
Contact Nos: - 1. Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited Authorised Officer Mr.Yathish.K and Mobile No.09945222333.

E-Auction Sale Notice

Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Aditya Birla Finance Limited under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) for the recovery of amount due from borrower/s, offers are invited by the undersigned in sealed covers for purchase of immovable property, as described hereunder, which is in the physical possession, on 'As Is Where Is Basis', 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis', Particulars of which are given below:-

Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property	Reserve Price (RP)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)	Total Loan Outstanding (As on 16.03.2021)
1.Mr.Puvaiah Kodendara 2.Mrs.Archana.B 3. M/s.Sabari Designs All Having Address at 602, 6th Floor, Varsha Apartment, CV Raman Road, Sadashivanagar, Bangalore Urban District, Karnataka - 560080	13.12.2019 for Rs. 1,96,16,415/- as on 06.12.2019	**SCHEDULE – A:** All the piece and parcel of property situated at Flat No.102, 1st Floor, VARSHA Apartment, Property No.221, CV Raman Road, RMV Extension, Banglore 560080, measuring East to West 120 feet, North to South 80 feet, bounded as follows:- East by Road, West by Site No.222, North by Road, South by Site No.262 & 263 **Property Schedule:** Apartment No.102, on the first floor bearing corporation No.99/29/ 221/7/3 in Ward No.99 in Ward 99 only in the multi storied building constructed in the above mentioned Schedule-A Building Name VARSHA Apartments in Complex E1 Plaza Apartments hereto approximately measuring 1650 sq.ft., interest in the common space, passages, pipes, drains, stair case and undivided share right title ownership and interest in above mentioned Schedule A Property only equivalent to 414 sq.ft., of undivided interest.	Rs. 1,94,60,250/-	Rs. 19,46,025/-	Rs.1,20,49,823.52 in Loan Account No. LNBANLAP-06170035393 & Rs.1,15,66,947/- in LNBANLAP-08160027052

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please log on to the website https://sarfaesi.auctiontiger.net

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES BY WAY OF E-AUCTION: -

- Date of Inspection of the Immovable Property is on 27.03.2021 between 10:00 am to 05:00 pm.
- Last Date & Time of submitting EMD : 06th April 2021 from 10:00 am to 5 :00 pm.
- The Auction Sale will be an Online E-Auction/Bidding through approved Service Provider M/s E- Procurement Technologies Limited Help Line Nos. 079-68136837 / 80 / 90 Help Line E-mail id: support@auctiontiger.net through the web portal https://sarfaesi.auctiontiger.net;
- The Auction Sale will be held on 07/04/2021 between 10.00 am to 01.00 pm with auto-extensions for 5 (five) minutes in case a bid is placed in the last 5 minutes before the appointed closing time;
- The bid price to be submitted shall be above the Reserve Price fixed by the Authorised Officer ("AO") and the bidders shall further improve their offer in multiples of Rs.10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand only).
- The properties will not be sold below the Reserve Price set by the AO. The bid quoted below the Reserve Price shall be rejected and the EMD deposited shall be forfeited.
- The successful bidder shall have to pay 25% of the purchase amount (including Earnest Money) already paid within 24 hours of the closure of the E-Auction sale proceedings. The Balance 75% of the purchase price shall have to be paid within 15 (fifteen) days of confirmation of the sale by the Financial Institution or such extended period as agreed upon in writing by and solely at the discretion of the AO failing which the Financial Institution shall forfeit amounts already paid/deposited by the purchaser.
- Bidders are advised to visit the said website for Annexure and detailed Terms and Conditions of the sale before submitting their bids and participating in the proceedings.
- Bids shall be submitted online only in the prescribed format(s) with relevant details duly filled in. Bids submitted in any other format / incomplete bids are liable to be rejected.
- Annexure shall be accompanied by copies of the following KYC documents viz. (i) PAN Card (ii) Aadhar Card/Passport (iii) Current Address proof (iv) valid e-mail id (v) contact number (mobile/landline) (vi) Board Resolution to participate in the auction (for a company) etc. Scanned copies of the said documents shall be submitted to the e-mail id stated above. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) as mentioned against each property described in the accompanying Sale Notice shall be deposited through Demand Draft.
- The bidders shall hold a valid e-mail id as all the relevant information from the Secured Creditor/the Service Provider may be conveyed through email only.
- Prospective intending bidders may contact the Service Provider on the details mentioned above to avail online training on participating in the e-auction. However, neither the Authorized Officer nor the Secured Creditor nor the Service Provider shall be responsible for any technical lapses/internet outage/power failure etc.
- The EMD of the unsuccessful bidder will be returned of closure of the E-Auction proceedings.
- The sale is subject to confirmation by the Financial Institution. If the Borrower/Guarantor(s) pay the entire amount due to the Secured Creditor before the appointed date and time of e-auction, no sale will be concluded.
- To the best of knowledge and information of the AO, no other encumbrances exist on the aforesaid property, however the prospective tenderers are advised to do their own due diligence and conduct independent enquiries in regard to the title/encumbrances etc. The AO shall not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect to the aforesaid properties. The properties are being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to the Secured Creditor.
- The AO has the right to reject any tender/tenders (for either of the property) or even may cancel the e-auction without assigning any reasons thereof.
- On compliance of terms of sale, AO shall issue 'Sale Certificate ' in favor of purchaser. All expenses relating to stamp duty, registration charges, conveyance, VAT, TDS etc. shall be borne by the purchaser.
- The sale is subject to the conditions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act 2002 (54 of 2002) and the conditions mentioned above.

Date: 22nd March 2021
Place: Bengaluru

Sd/- Authorised Officer
ADITYA BIRLA HOUSING FINANCE LTD

$36 bn was pumped in by foreign portfolio investors into the Indian stock markets this fiscal up to March 10, which is the highest since FY13, showed RBI data

If you are regular with your investments, you need to continue to do so. But, need to focus on more savings

WHAT A COVID-19 SECOND WAVE WILL MEAN FOR YOUR MONEY

RAJAS KELKAR

VACCINATION is the name of the game when it comes to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. As more people take their first shots, there is a surge in the number of infections. A second wave is already playing out in Maharashtra, the wealthiest state in the country. The government agencies are grappling with the twin challenge of containing the virus's spread and vaccinating the population. Multiple reports suggest that many cities are facing lockdowns and night curfews.

It is a year since governments imposed the first set of lockdowns across India. It was unchartered territory, and governments were figuring out ways to deal with the situation. That is not the case now. The second wave is currently confined to six states and primarily in Maharashtra, only. Yes, there would be implications for the economy. However, there is awareness about the steps to be taken to curb the spread. At the same time, India has already launched the world's most extensive vaccination programme.

All of that could mean a lot to your money.

Focus on saving more

Businesses are all set to go through an upheaval. While the economic activity went back to levels before the lockdown last year, there are changes in businesses' day-to-day affairs.

A lot of them have adapted to work-from-home by employees. Many small businesses are functioning without offices. Jobs are precious. If you are lucky to have a job, hang on to it. Your focus this year has to continue to be on saving. The latest RBI Bulletin for March 2021 has an article on household finance. In the second quarter to September 2020, households have moved to spend more on discretionary items than just 'essential spending'.

The contraction in private consumption has reduced as a result. However, the reality is that we are still in a phase where households would have to remain concerned. It is amply clear that the Covid-19 pandemic will unwind slowly. In that context, your finances have to support you. Your spending has to be below your means no matter the pandemic situation.

Invest regularly

If you are regular with your investments, you need to continue to do so. Your systematic investment plans should not stop. If you are investing directly in the stock market, identity companies that are beneficiaries in the situation. This column explained the 'vaccine portfolio' in September 2020. We talked about sectors that could be potential beneficiaries of the lockdown or the pandemic. It may sound perverse, but the crisis throws up opportunities for a lot of businesses. Since then, hospital, pharmaceutical, education stocks have dramatically gained in value.

There was a lot of concern about the unorganised sector in India. While loan moratoriums helped small businesses last year, most companies would have to make difficult decisions this year. Unorganised sector businesses will have to make way for the organised sector to take over. That is clear from the commentary by the corporate management of large, listed companies in the paints, construction material and other sectors.

For example, the tiles sector's sales were much higher than the overall demand from metros and cities, according to one research from ICICI Securities, a leading brokerage. That is even though the demand is hovering around 70-80 per cent of the pre-pandemic period. That is due to the structural problems faced by the unorganised sector. A similar trend was seen in other sectors too.

Active and passive investing

Most of you may not be aware of the nuances of sectors or ways to identify businesses that could do well going forward. You must continue investing through exchange-traded funds or mutual funds. The National Pension Scheme is a good starting point for many of you looking to create long-term wealth through your savings. You should not invest the money you need immediately in the stock market based on tips or rumours.

Please keep it in a fixed deposit or a liquid mutual fund. Gold prices have gone down 10-12 per cent over the past few weeks. If you do not have a financial advisor, you may want to get one sooner than later. Get your asset allocation right as you plan your financial future post pandemic.

(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

MONEY-WISE

FLEXIBILITY IS THE KEY

IN September, 2020, markets regulator SEBI caught the mutual fund industry by surprise with its sudden diktat strait-jacketing multi-cap funds. This was based on their perception (undefined then) that the real meaning of a multi cap fund was the allocation of 25 per cent weightage each across large, mid and small-cap stocks.

I had written a column in this publication back then, wondering why the goal-post needed to be shifted, and concluded with the following lines : 'Well, how about simply re-naming these funds Flexi-Caps instead and getting on with business as usual? You see, the Yanks have a famous saying; 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' Applies in this case.'

Not so surprisingly, in November, 2020, SEBI, in a climb-down of sorts, introduced a new category of equity mutual funds called Flexicap Funds where the fund had the freedom to invest in companies without any predetermined market capitalization unlike the 'redefined' Multi-caps. Further, SEBI also allowed fund houses to convert an existing scheme (read as Multi-Cap) into a Flexi-Cap scheme.

Let us now cast a glance at some of those funds that undertook this 'title change'.

Axis Flexicap Fund with an AUM of ₹7,009 crore invests largely in Financials and Technology stocks. Its portfolio comprises 92 per cent in large-cap stocks, 7 per cent in Mid-caps and a little above 1 per cent in small-cap stocks. The 1-year and 3-year returns of this fund are 32.5 per cent and 17.5 per cent, respectively.

Kotak Flexi Cap Fund has the highest industry AUM worth ₹34,515 crore. It has close to 70 per cent of its total equity investments in Large Cap, 30 per cent in Mid-cap and 0.5 per cent in small-cap stocks. The returns for this fund over a 1-year and 3-year time frame are approximately 39 per cent and 13 per cent respectively. The top industry this fund invests in is Financials followed by the Construction and Energy sectors.

Parag Parikh Flexi Cap Fund has an AUM of Rs. 7,452 crore. Its portfolio mix comprises Large Caps at close to 58 per cent, 27 per cent in mid-caps and 14 per cent in small-cap stocks. The 1-year and 3-years returns are approximately 51 per cent and 17.5 per cent respectively. Its larger investments are in the Financial, Technical and Healthcare sectors.

Aditya Birla Sun Life Flexicap Fund with an AUM of ₹12,830 crore has provided returns of nearly 40 per cent and 11.8 per cent over 1-year and 3-years' time frame. Its portfolio mix comprises almost 67 per cent in large cap, 24 per cent in mid-cap and close to 9 per cent in small-cap stocks. The sector-wise allocations reflect the Financial Sector having maximum exposure, followed by Healthcare and Technology.

Clearly, the flexibility to stay under or overweight across market capitalization categories with flexi-cap funds provides a fund manager with more opportunities to be nimble footed to both, seize opportunities as well as brave the periodic market storms. It might be interesting to make a comparative study on inflows into Multi and Flexi Cap funds in the years ahead. My hunch is that it is the latter that will leave the former way behind.

FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR
Head of LKW-India. He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com

Encashment of cheques will be hassle-free from Sept 30

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

IN order to make cheque settlement smoother and faster, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has asked banks to implement the image-based Cheque Truncation System (CTS) in all branches by September 30.

"To leverage the availability of CTS and provide uniform customer experience irrespective of location of her/his bank branch, it has been decided to extend CTS across all bank branches in the country. To facilitate this, banks shall have to ensure that all their branches participate in image-based CTS under respective grids by September 30, 2021," RBI said in a statement issued last week. Under the CTS, instead of physical movement of a cheque issued by a drawer, an electronic image of the cheque is transmitted to the paying branch through a clearing house, along with relevant information like data on the MICR band, date of presentation, presenting bank, among others. This eliminates the associated cost of movement of physical cheques and reduces the time required for their collection. This will drastically reduce the time taken to settle transactions by cheque.

"They are free to adopt a model of their choice, like deploying suitable infrastructure in every branch or following a hub & spoke model, etc. and concerned banks shall coordinate with the respective Regional Offices of RBI to operationalise this," said RBI. The central bank has also asked banks to inform the roadmap to achieve pan-India coverage of CTS and submit a status report before April 30, 2021. The CTS is not a new system and is used by some branches since 2010, however, not all branches have been using the system.

Time to make tax-saving investments running out

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

IF you are one of those who has put off making tax-saving investments until the very end, you are running out of time-the financial year ends on March 31 and with it goes the opportunity to make any such investments for the financial year 2020-21. So, here's a quick recap of easy-to-invest tax-saving instruments you can opt for before March 31.

If you are among those who have opted for the old I-T system with exemptions, Section 80C allows a total annual exemption of up to ₹1.5 lakh for investments made in certain instruments.

The first are the provident funds— EPF, VPF, and PPF. If you are a salaried individual, you will have an EPF account to which you and your employer contribute a certain percentage of your savings. If one so chooses, they can increase their contribution through the Voluntary Provident Fund-however, once the quantum of investment under the VPF is chosen, it has a lock-in period of five years.

For other categories of individual taxpayers, there is the option of the Public Provident Fund, which is also a government-backed scheme like the EPF providing 7.1 per cent interest currently and the interest is revised every quarter. While it enjoys Exempt-Exempt-Exempt status-i.e. the investment, the interest earned, and the amount withdrawn at maturity are all tax exempt.

Apart from the provident funds, one may also choose to invest in an Exchange Linked Savings Scheme (ELSS), the only equity-based instrument that has an exemption.

One may also choose to enrol in the National Pension Scheme (NPS). Such subscribers are allowed a deduction of not more than 10 per cent of the salary (Basic+DA) or 20 per cent of gross income for self-employed individuals. Under Section 80CCD(1B), voluntarily enrolling in the NPS also allows you to claim a deduction of ₹50,000 in addition to the ₹1.5 lakh deduction offered under Section 80C.

Tax savings through FDs

While normal fixed deposits are not exempt, tax-saving FDs with a lock-in period of at least five years such as the Post Office Time Deposits can be deducted under Section 80C.

TODAY'S STOCK PICK

VMART
Current Price ₹2,748
Target Price ₹3,500

VMART is strongly positioned to compete with regional and national players in the Value Retail segment given its better performance v/s national peers, strong liquidity (INR1b cash in 3QFY21), and the prudent inventory management seen during the coronavirus pandemic.

— Motilal Oswal Securities Limited

Disclaimer: The views and recommendations made above are that of the individual analyst or broking company, and not that of *The New Indian Express*.

EQUITIES

Covid-19 resurgence, rise in bond yields to drag markets: Analysts

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

THE stock market rebounded strongly on Friday after being in the red for six straight sessions. While BSE Sensex closed 641 points higher at 49,858 points, the NSE Nifty 50 ended at 14,744. During the week, however, the benchmark equity indices fell nearly two per cent as a surge in Covid-19 cases and rising bond yields played a spoilsport. Although the break from bearish sentiment brought some level of optimism among investors, experts have warned that high levels of volatility is likely to continue in the market.

"The market may remain volatile in the near term given volatility in bond yields, concerns over the rising commodity prices and risk of increase in inflation. In addition, a resurgence of covid cases continues to worry the market and hence it may continue with its roller coaster ride," said Siddhartha Khemka, head - retail research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Echoing similar sentiments, Gaurav Garg, head of research, CapitalVia Global Research said that any further surge in Covid-19 cases and rise in the US ten-years bond yield may lead to a downfall of the market. "Despite some greater relative weakness seen over the past week, we recommend remaining cautious, avoiding leveraged exposure to either side and booking profits with any opportunity for the same," he added.

According to Garg, 15,000 and 15,250 levels (NSE Nifty) will serve as key resistance, while the 14,500 and 14,250 levels will act as a support in the coming week.

To curtail a likely second wave, states such as Punjab, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have announced restrictions, including lockdown. Rusmik Oza, executive vice-president, head of fundamental research, Kotak Securities said that fresh restrictions by many states are being taken negatively by investors impacting economy driven stocks. "Internationally, the Fed seems less concerned over the recent surge in bond yields," she added.

Smart planning can help save for retirement even if you started late

BINITA JAISWAL @Chennai

WHEN it comes to retirement planning, the earlier you start the better it is. However, one mistake people make is to defer savings for retirement till it is very late. Experts say, even after starting late one can catch up with some smart planning.

By starting early saving, you can create a large retirement corpus by investing even small amounts. But if you are late on saving then first acknowledge the problem and assess your financial situation objectively. One must also seek help of financial experts to get best advices which will help in better savings. If you are a salaried individual, experts say the first thing that you can bet on for your retirement savings is your EPF (Employees' Provident Fund) account. However, a Voluntary Provident Fund or VPF is definitely something that one needs to focus on. One can always increase savings in the VPF by voluntarily contributing a larger share.

Experts advise that if one has capability for high risk tolerance, then he/she should start investing regularly in equity funds as well. In this scenario, your portfolio will have a combination of debt (EPF, VPF, PPF) and equity instruments (equity funds). If you are just starting out, it is strongly advised to have a major chunk of your regular investments going towards equity funds. This allocation will help you earn higher returns for long durations of time and can gain from compounding interests. According to Chennai-based financial advisor S Vijayan, the golden rule for saving is to start early but if anyone is late then the person should focus on saving as much as possible from earnings. Since you have already lost a lot of time you need to make up to some extent by investing more in the remaining years.

EXPRESS READ

449 infra projects hit with cost overruns

New Delhi: As many as 449 infrastructure projects, each worth ₹150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns totalling more than ₹4.29 lakh crore, according to a report from the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation. Of the 1,736 such projects, 547 were delayed, the report noted.

Gold imports slip 3.3% in April-Feb

New Delhi: Gold imports, which have a bearing on the country's current account deficit, fell 3.3 per cent to $26.11 billion during April-February 2020-21, data from the commerce ministry data showed. Imports of the yellow metal stood at $27 billion in April-February 2019-20, narrowing trade deficit.

'Specify reasons when rejecting insurance claims'

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @New Delhi

THE Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has cautioned insurers against not being transparent to policyholders while rejecting health insurance claims. "Insurer shall ensure that the repudiation of the claim is not based on presumptions and conjectures," the IRDAI said in a circular to Life, General and Standalone Health Insurance Companies as well as TPAs.

IRDAI said when a claim is denied or repudiated, the insurer should communicate the same, specifically mentioning reasons and also referring to the corresponding policy conditions. Details of the grievance redressal procedures available with the insurer as well as the Insurance Ombudsman along with addresses of the respective offices should also be furnished to the policyholders.

Besides processing of the claims in a "transparent, seamless and efficient manner within prescribed timelines," the insurance companies should ensure the policyholder is provided with granular details of the payments made, amounts disallowed and the reasons for the amount disallowed.

The insurance regulator said it is essential for all insurers to establish procedures to let policyholders get clear and transparent communication at various stages of claim processing.

Bhavani clinches ninth national title

India's first fencer to qualify for the Olympic Games in Tokyo, CA Bhavani Devi (Tamil Nadu), snapped up her ninth title in the 31st Senior National Fencing Championships at the Delhi Public School on Saturday. She overcame Joshna Joseph (Kerala) 15-7 in the finals to grab the title.

Tick mark on progress report

Win over England a big boost ahead of World Cup but question marks over batting order

VENKATA KRISHNA B @Chennai

India batting heavyweights Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma (R)

SINCE 2018, India have won T20 series in South Africa, Ireland, England, New Zealand, Australia apart from beating West Indies (twice), Australia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, England at home and winning a tri-series in Sri Lanka. Add to this, they have drawn a series against West Indies (in the US), Australia and South Africa. Their only series defeat in this period dates back to 2019, where they lost 1-2 in New Zealand when they were without several first-choice players.

Going by the manner in which they rallied to beat an England side, seen as favourites to win the T20 World Cup later this year, all things indicate that hosts are on the right track. Batting first and setting targets has been one of India's problems. In that sense, they would be relieved they ticked that box in the fourth and fifth match where they were left with no choice after losing the toss. That they adjusted to the conditions and managed to put up a winnable total will give them confidence as they continue to build a team capable of winning a World Cup.

With these kind of performances, they should have the favourites tag around their neck. But there is a reason why teams look beyond them. There is something that is still unconvincing about India's batting; one gets a feeling that it could be found wanting when it matters the most. Deja vu? Yes. It is what stopped India's run at the last two World Cups, where their run ended twice in the semifinals.

Unlike then, India now have the personnel to do the job. This England series should have helped them find a settled combination. Instead, KL Rahul's indifferent form has only added to more uncertainty to their roles. Before the series began, according to Virat Kohli, he was India's first-choice opener alongside Rohit Sharma. But by the end of it, the Indian captain has sent a message that he wants to open with the vice-captain which ensures two of the team's best batsmen will get to face as many deliveries as possible. That Kohli would open for Royal Challengers Bangalore suggests India are still keeping their options open.

If Rahul is back among runs in the IPL, this could change and there is no reason to take Kohli's comments in face value, but it just shows how far from being settled India are. "There is still a long time to go for the World Cup, so early days to talk about how our batting will look like. We have to sit and analyse what suits the team the most. KL has been one of our key players in limited overs, especially in this format. Looking at current form, the team management decided to go with the best 11. Having said that, it doesn't send any signal that KL will not be considered or anything like that. Things might change as we go closer to World Cup," Rohit said on Saturday.

With Rahul struggling, the flexibility that India showed was laudable. Sensing a flat deck, they brought in an extra bowling option, which allowed Kohli to open. India reckon the their batting order which will have the likes of Rahul, Kohli, Rohit, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Ishan Kishan will allow them to be flexible.

Man City enter FA Cup last four

AFP @ London

MANCHESTER City's quest for an unprecedented quadruple of trophies remains intact after seeing off Everton 2-0 to reach the FA Cup semifinals on Saturday as Southampton also booked their place in the last four. City were far from their flowing best at Goodison Park, but goals in the final six minutes from Ilkay Gundogan and Kevin De Bruyne booked City's place in the semifinals for the fourth time in five seasons.

Three cheer for Brighton

BRIGHTON: Brighton surged six points clear of the Premier League relegation zone with a comprehensive 3-0 win over Newcastle on Saturday. On Sunday, Arsenal came back from three goals down to draw West Ham 3-3.

EXPRESS READ

Archer out of ODIs, to miss part of IPL: ECB

LONDON: Jofra Archer has been ruled out of England's one-day international series against India and will also miss the start of the Indian Premier League due to an ongoing elbow injury, the England and Wales Cricket Board statement said on Sunday.

All England Open: Lee, Okuhara victorious

BIRMINGHAM: Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia won the men's singles title at the All England Open in Birmingham. Lee crushed Denmark's Viktor Axelsen 30-29, 20-22, 21-9. Nozomi Okuhara of Japan beat Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong 21-12, 21-16 in the women's final.

Kadhe, Rashmika national champs

GURUGRAM: Maharashtra's Arjun Kadhe and Telangana's Rashmika Bhamidipaty emerged national champs at the 2020 The Project Tennis Hard Court Championships. Kadhe got the better of Tamil Nadu's Prithvi Sekhar 6-3, 6-4 in the men's singles summit clash.

DELHI WORLD CUP

More restrictions as cases increase

AYANTAN CHOWDHURY @ New Delhi

WITH the increasing number of cases and reports of athletes breaching the bio-bubble, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) has further tightened restrictions. In another area of concern, India's quota hopeful Anish Bhanwala was in touch with one of the Indian pistol shooters who tested positive. His event starts from Thursday but he has been coming to the range to practice daily.

While all athletes were earlier allowed to come to the dining hall, all Indian shooters have been forbidden to venture out of their rooms until the end of the World Cup. No such restrictions have been imposed on the foreign shooters. Even regarding buses, all teams have been allotted separate buses while earlier, they could board different buses depending on when they wanted to return to their rooms.

A national coach even commented that no positive cases were registered during the various camps and selection trials held at the Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range even when quite a few shooters were travelling from their homes while the World Cup has seen them stationed at a hotel near the venue.

Ganemat Sekhon became first Indian woman to win a World Cup medal in skeet with bronze

Even NRAI are surprised at how so many Indian shooters are testing positive. "Our athletes and support staff will now be eating only inside their rooms and the food will be served outside their rooms. Foreign athletes can come to the dining hall but not in large groups. Anybody can be infected but precautions have to be taken and athletes need to be more serious about the SOPs," a top NRAI official said.

The international body (ISSF) has been made aware of the bio-bubble breach and the secretary general of the body informed that they are taking stock of the situation. "We are quite happy with the way the tournament has been organised so far and we have also spoken to the LOC and they have assured us of all possible help to keep the situation under control," Alexander Ratner informed.

"Now, the team hotels have 24 hours security outside the hotel and all athletes have been strictly asked not to step out of the hotels," said an official associated with the LOC.

According to a source, quite a few athletes including Indians have been asking for day passes to go out and visit the city. A few foreign athletes including medal winners posted photos of their trips around Delhi which prompted SAI to issue a statement regarding breach in the bio-bubble. Even parents of shooters have asked officials to allow them to enter the venue on non-match days while their wards practice. So far, six shooters including four Indians have tested positive for coronavirus.

INDIA CLIMB TO TOP OF LEADERBOARD

NEW DELHI: Two gold medals and a historic skeet bronze on Sunday ensured India climbed to the top of the medals tally of the ongoing ISSF World Cup on Sunday. The hosts have eight medals with three gold to their name. The two gold that India won came in the men's and women's 10m air pistol team events. The trio of Manu Bhaker, Yashaswini Deswal and Shri Nivetha beat Poland convincingly by a margin of 16-8 in the final. In the men's discipline, Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma and Shahzar Rizvi got the better of Vietnam 17-11. Later in the day, history was created at the shotgun range when Ganemat Sekhon became the first Indian woman to win a World Cup medal in skeet. She won bronze with a score of 40.

India women lose against SA

AGENCIES @Lucknow

India dished out a superb batting effort but their bowling colleagues failed to step up as South Africa registered a series-clinching six-wicket win in a last ball thriller in the second T20 International here on Sunday.

Shafali Verma (47) blasted six fours and two sixes in her 31-ball innings and forged a 79-run stand with Harleen Deol (31) to set the foundation while Richa Ghosh provided the late charge with a 26-ball 44 not out to help India post a competitive 158/4 after being put in to bat.

Chasing the target, Lizelle Lee smashed a 45-ball 70 studded with 11 fours and a six, while Laura Wolvaardt slammed an unbeaten 39-ball 53 as South Africa romped home in the last ball. **India 158/4 in 20 ovs** (Shafali Verma 47, Richa Ghosh 44 n.o) **lost to SA 159/4 in 20 ovs** (Lizelle Lee 70, Laura Wolvaardt 53 n.o).

Manchester City stay on course for quadruple, enter FA Cup semifinals

AFP @London

MANCHESTER City's quest for an unprecedented quadruple of trophies remains intact after seeing off Everton 2-0 to reach the FA Cup semifinals on Saturday as Southampton also booked their place in the last four. City were far from their flowing best at Goodison Park, but goals in the final six minutes from Ilkay Gundogan and Kevin De Bruyne booked City's place in the semifinals for the fourth time in five seasons.

Pep Guardiola described the clash as the toughest his side have had since November as they recorded a 25th win in 26 matches in all competitions.

"It was the toughest game since the last international break we had. We have been incredible in terms of results and performances (over that period)," said Guardiola.

Man City's Kevin De Bruyne (R) scores against Everton | AFP

"Tonight was so difficult, they have experienced players behind the ball with two up for the counter-attack. It was incredible commitment from my players." City won the domestic treble of Premier League, FA Cup and League Cup for the first time in English football history two seasons ago.

Three cheer for Brighton

BRIGHTON: Brighton surged six points clear of the Premier League relegation zone with a comprehensive 3-0 win over Newcastle on Saturday to pile more pressure on Magpies boss Steve Bruce. Leandro Trossard, Danny Welbeck and Neal Maupay were on target for the Seagulls as for once this season Graham Potter's men turned their dominance into goals. On Sunday, Arsenal came back from three goals down to draw West Ham 3-3.

Real close in on Atletico

MADRID: Karim Benzema scored twice as Real Madrid hung on for a 3-1 win over Celta Vigo on Saturday, reducing the gap to three points behind La Liga leaders Atletico Madrid.

THREE IN HUNT

I-League gets ready for photo finish

MARTIN JOSEPH @Kochi

IF there is one legacy the I-League continues to uphold, it is the spectacular photo-finishes that the league has been producing season in, season out.

From minnows Aizawl FC beating Mohun Bagan on the final day of the 2015-16 season to the Mariners beating Bengaluru FC on a rain-drenched night at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium a season before that, the I-League has been full of spectacular storylines. Then there were seasons where Minerva Punjab and Chennai City won on final matchdays.

Once again, the league winner is going to be decided on the final day with three teams level on points. Sunday was a dramatic day in the league. Manipuri side TRAU FC and Goan outfit Churchill Brothers went head to head with both teams sitting top of the tree on 25 points. Ninety minutes later, they finished with a 1-1 draw with Luka Majcen's 28th-minute penalty being cancelled out by a 43rd-minute strike from Konsam Singh. Gokulam Kerala FC had started the day with an outside shot at the title as they were trailing the duo by two points, and the draw between TRAU and Churchill was the perfect result they hoped for.

	TEAM	M	W	D	L	GD	P
1	GOKULAM FC	14	8	2	4	11	26
2	CHURCHILL FC	14	7	5	2	4	26
3	TRAU FC	14	7	5	2	11	26
4	MOHAMMEDAN SC	14	5	5	4	-1	20
5	PUNJAB FC	13	5	4	4	3	19
6	REAL KASHMIR FC	13	4	6	3	6	18

Vincenzo Annese's team went about doing what was expected of them as they took a 2-0 lead early on thanks to a brace from Denny Antwi (20, 34). But it was a nerve-wracking end to the game with Mohammedan Sporting scoring in the 85th minute through Sujit Sadhu but the Malabarians held on. Once the dust settled, Gokulam were perched at the top but only thanks to better goal difference. They will now face TRAU in a showdown clash.

It is Gokulam's title to lose now and the Kerala-based outfit could become a trailblazer of sorts back home if they win as no team from Kerala has achieved the feat of winning a national league. Similarly, no Manipuri side has won the title either which makes it all the more significant for these teams. As far as equations go, Gokulam hold the upper hand as they have better head to head records over both the Red Machines and TRAU. If Gokulam beat TRAU while Churchill beat Punjab, it will be Gokulam who will emerge champions. Even a draw will be sufficient for Gokulam if Churchill lose.

Meanwhile, Santiago Varela will have a point to prove after being shown the door by Gokulam and having taken over at the Goan outfit. For his team to win the silverware, TRAU and Gokulam will have to play out a draw while they'll have to win.

Full story: newindianexpress.com

QuoteExpress

ONCE A NEW TECHNOLOGY ROLLS OVER YOU, IF YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE STEAMROLLER, YOU'RE PART OF THE ROAD

STEWART BRAND

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWSS DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR
PLOT NO. 1214 (P), AT : TAPOVAN, P.O: KHANDAGIRI, BHUBANESWAR – 30
Tel- (0674) 2384108, E-Mail: eerwss_bbsr@nic.in
Govt. of Odisha e-Procurement Notice, Bid Identification Notice No. 32 of 2020-21

O-1276: The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bhubaneswar on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage bid though e-procurement in double cover system according to norm of e-procurement.

1. Nature of Work Supplying all labour , material T&P for laying of rising main and Distribution pipe line of HDPE/GI/DI, construction of pump house, compound wall, RCC ESR, UGR,SV chamber, Stand post, chlorination arrangement, installation of IRPs with other ancillary works for Piped water supply scheme under Khordha Division
2. No. of Tender : **04 Nos.**
3. Tender Paper Cost : **Rs. 10000.00**
4. Value of Work From : Rs.202.33 lakhs
5. Class of Contractor : **" B " & "A"**
6. Date & time of availability of Bid document in portal : **25.03.2021 4.00 P.M. to 05.04.2021 Upto 3.00 P.M.**
7. Date & Time of seeking tender clarification : **25.03.2021 4.00 P.M. to 30.03.2021 Upto 3.00 P.M. during office hour**
8. Date & Time of opening of tender : 06.04.2021 at 11.00 A.M. in the O/O E.E., RWSS Divn., Bhubaneswar
9. Time of Completion : **180 days**
10. The bidders have to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the web site : **https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in.** Corrigendum if any shall only be published in web site mentioned.

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
RWS&S DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR OIPR-25011/11/0007/2021

Marketing Communication and Advertising Limited
(A Govt. of Karnataka Undertaking)
No. 42, MC&A House, Millers Road, Bengaluru - 560 052.
No.: MC&A/F&A/FD/2020-21 Date: 22.03.2021

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Only through e-procurement)

MC&A Ltd. invites separate tenders (2 Nos.) through e-Procurement portal as per KTPP Act, 1999 from reputed Nationalized Banks to quote competitive rate of Interest for investment of Company's surplus funds in Fixed Deposit. Documents can be accessed from e-Procurement website: **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sl. No.	Tender Nos.	Last date & time for submission of tender	Opening date & time of tender
1	MC&A/F&A/FD/23/2020-21	31.03.2021 2.00 p.m.	01.04.2021 2.30 p.m.
2	MC&A/F&A/FD/24/2020-21	01.04.2021 2.00 p.m.	03.04.2021 2.30 p.m.

The management has the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons thereon.

Sd/- Managing Director

COVID-19. DO NOT PANIC, BE AWARE
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

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Government of Karnataka
KARNATAKA SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATION BOARD
6th Cross, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru-560 003
Ph: 080-23349434 Fax: 23347670
No: B1/DVS & WP/12/2020-21/Call-4 Date : 18.03.2021

e-AUCTION NOTIFICATION

The Director(Exams), Karnataka Secondary Education Examination Board, hereby invites e-AUCTION (call-4) bidding from eligible bidders for the sale and disposal of valued answer booklets, unused answer booklets, AML & CNR formats, used envelopes and waste cloth in a single lot on 'As is where is basis' pertaining to SSLC Examination 2020 as per KTPP Act-1999, through e-procurement portal only. e-AUCTION documents may be downloaded from **www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** and **www.kseeb.kar.nic.in** e-AUCTION Commencement date **is 22.03.2021** and the last date for submission **is 06.04.2021 at 4.00 p.m.** Pre-bid meeting is on **29.03.2021 at 11.30 a.m.** Technical bid will be opened **on 09.04.2021 at 11.30 a.m.** Reserve price of this e-AUCTION is **Rs. 58,49,460/-.** The Earnest Money Deposit is **Rs. 2,92,473/-** for more details contact board during office hours

Sd/- Director (Exams).

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.
Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

भारत सरकार–अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA-DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण तथा अनुरक्षण समूह, एसडीएससी शार, श्रीहरिकोटा –524124, नेल्लूर (जि), आं.प्र.
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR, SRIHARIKOTA-524124, NELLORE (Dt.), A.P.

संक्षिप्त ई–निविदा सूचना / BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE
तिथि / Date: 19.03.2021

सं.:शार: सीएमजी सिविल:अनु:ई–जन निविदा /No: SHAR: CMG CIVIL: MINT: E-PublicTender-10 / 20-21

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, समान प्रकृति एवं परिमाण के कार्य का अनुभव रखने वाले पात्र निविदाकारों/एजेंसियों से निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए ई–टेंडरिंग के माध्यम से मुहर–बंद मद दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित हैं। / On behalf of President of India, online item rate tenders are invited through **e-tendering** for the following works from eligible contractors/ agencies having experience in works of similar nature and magnitude.

कार्य का नाम Title of the work	सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार स्थित स्प्रोब में ग्रुप –1 पंप हाउस जलाशय के समीप अग्नि सुरक्षा प्रणाली एवं अग्नि सूचना प्रणाली निगरानी कक्ष तथा एस–139 खंडों के लिए सहायक सड़क व्यवस्था का निर्माण। / Construction of Fire Protection System & Fire Detection system monitoring Rooms near to Group-1 pump House water reservoir & Proposed approach road disposal of sidelined S-139 segments, SPROB, SDSC SHAR.	सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार स्थित शार चिकित्सालय के पुरुष वार्ड (सं. 2) एवं महिला वार्ड (सं. 2) के प्रसाधनों का नवीनीकरण तथा अंतरिक्ष केंद्रीय विद्यालय, फेज–II के पश्चिमी ओर मौजूदा क्षतिग्रस्त बाड़, खंभा एवं एमएस गेट की मरम्मत एवं प्रतिस्थापन। / Renovation of Toilets at Male Ward (2 No.s) and Female Ward (2 No.s) at SHAR Hospital & Repair and replacement of existing damaged fence, pole & MS gate at West side of Space Central School ground, PHC-II area, SDSC SHAR.	सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार में 6सी स्थित मौजूदा पंप हाउस का विस्तार तथा स्टेक्स के भवन सं 1 स्थित जलशोधन संयंत्र के लिए नई बाड़ प्रदान करना। / Extension of existing Pump house at 6C & Providing new fencing for water treatment plant at building no.1 at STEX, SDSC SHAR.	सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार के फेज–II क्षेत्र में 110 टाईप–VII एवं टाईप–VIII रिहायशी घरों में रूफ ओएचटीएस के माध्यम से रिसाव को रोकना। / Arresting leakages through the roof OHTS of 110 no.s of Type-VII & VIII occupant quarters in PHC-II area, SDSC SHAR.
निविदा सं./Tender No	टी/सी/ T/C-20-033	टी/सी/ T/C-20-034	टी/सी/ T/C-20-035	टी/सी/ T/C-20-036
निविदा का अनुमानित मूल्य Est. Cost Put to tender	₹ 22.00 लाख / Lakhs	₹ 27.92 लाख / Lakhs	₹ 15.82 लाख / Lakhs	₹ 63.28 लाख / Lakhs
पूर्ण करने की अवधि Period of completion	06 माह/ Months	06 माह/ Months	05 माह/ Months	08 माह/ Months

निविदा दस्तावेज हेतु अनुरोध व डाउनलोड करने की अवधि / Period during which tender documents can be requested : 22.03.2021, 10:00 बजे /hrs से / to 01.04.2021, 14:30 बजे /hrs

निविदा अपलोड करने हेतु अंतिम तिथि एवं समय / Last date & time for uploading of tenders: 05.04.2021 के / & 14:30 बजे / hrs

बयाना राशि जमा (ईएमडी): विस्तृत निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना में संलग्नक–1 के रूप में अनुलग्नित निर्धारित प्रपत्र में बयाना राशि जमा घोषणा पत्र प्रस्तुत करेंगे। / Earnest Money Deposit (EMD): Earnest Money Deposit Declaration shall be submitted in prescribed format enclosed as Annexure-1in detailed NIT

कृपया इच्छुक निविदाकार कार्यालय में उपलब्ध विस्तृत निविदा सूचना या हमारी वेबसाइट **www.isro.gov.in** या **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** से संदर्भ लें। अन्य विवरण एवं निविदा दस्तावेजों के क्रय हेतु **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** देखें या दूरभाष सं. 08623–226083/6085 पर संपर्क करें। / Interested tenderers may please refer detailed tender notice available in our office or our website **www.isro.gov.in** or **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** further details and purchase of tender documents. Contact Phone 08623 - 226083/6085

ह/– समूह प्रधान, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG/ SDSC SHAR

Greece's government has announced plans to reopen the Acropolis in Athens and other ancient sites nationwide and provide free weekly rapid tests for Covid-19 for all the country's residents as it prepares to restart the tourism season in mid-May. Lockdown measures have been in effect since November.

EXFILE • ARCHITECTURE

A HOTEL THAT FLOATS & ROTATES

Turkish architecture design studio Hayri Atak has come up with a proposal to build an "eco-floating" hotel off the coast of Qatar. The concept is still in design phase and largely depends on experimental power technology. We take a look

IN ITS OWN WORLD

The architects envision the circular construction to slowly rotate, finishing a full circle in 24 hours

3 different entrances to the hotel will ensure that a connection to the shore can be made during any point of the rotation

GLASS ROOF (WHIRLPOOL) The roof will collect rainwater via a big vortex

VAWTAU (VERTICAL AXIS WIND TURBINE AND UMBRELLA) Each VAWTAU can generate 25 KW of electricity

GOLF CLUB

HELIPAD

PROPELLER

BLADE

3,80,000 SQUARE FEET HOTEL SIZE

152 rooms with private balconies overlooking the ocean

UNDER THE HOOD

The rotation will be done using dynamic positioning, a computer system that automatically maintains a ship's position with propellers and thrusters

ENERGY SOURCE

The hotel will generate its own power through solar, wind and tidal waves

GREEN POWER

The design incorporates the vertical axis wind turbine and umbrella (VAWTAU) system. Vertical axis wind turbines are a variation of the ordinary wind turbine, with two curved blades attached to the shaft. The umbrella is attached below the blades to catch sunlight

ACCESS

People can reach the hotel by car, by boat or by helicopter. The plan is to station the hotel in the coastal waters off Qatar

VORTEX

One key part of the design is to place the rainwater-collecting vortex in the middle of the hotel lobby

Last chance for a people's vaccine?

Patent for 2016 invention can give US govt leverage over major pharmaceutical companies

MEDICINE

WASHINGTON: A molecular tweak that was crucial to the development of at least 5 coronavirus vaccines is set to be patented this month, with the US government being in control of the patent. This could be the last best chance for officials to pressure drug companies to make vaccines more accessible in less-developed countries, the *New York Times* reported on Sunday.

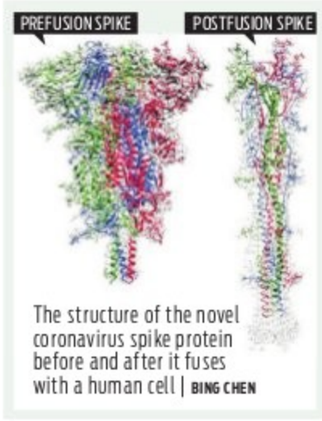
Covid-19 led to an unprecedented vaccine effort in 2020, with Western governments pouring billions into procurement and production to speed up development. As a result, highly effective coronavirus vaccines passed through clinical trial in record times.

But 90% of the 400 million vaccines delivered globally thus far have gone to high and middle-income countries, *The Times* said, meaning that billions of people may have to wait for years to get a shot.

The roots of this inequality lie largely in how the Western governments designed their contracts with companies. Though authorities could have included contract clauses forcing pharma companies to share vaccine recipes and know-how with poor countries, they failed to do so. *The Times* reported that US government "used unusual contracts that omitted its right to take over intellectual property or influence the price and availability of vaccines. They did not let the government compel companies to share their technology. British and other European leaders made similar concessions as they ordered enough doses to vaccinate their populations multiple times over."

On top of that, the US and EU have for months blocked a proposal put forward by India and South Africa at the WTO to waive intellectual property rights for Covid-19 vaccines and treatments.

Pharma companies now own nearly all the intellectual property. A key exception to this is the patent for the molecular tweak, a US government-backed discovery in 2016 on altering a vaccine's spike protein.



The structure of the novel coronavirus spike protein before and after it fuses with a human cell | BING CHEN

To harm humans, viruses need a way to enter our cells. Coronaviruses have spikes that grab hold of the proteins in our cells. Once it has gotten a grip, the spike forcefully fuses with our cells and changes structure (see the image above). It is this fusion that scientists think is necessary to block with antibodies.

In 2016, American scientists Dr Barney Graham and Jason McLellan, a former post-doc, came up with a key piece of protein engineering. McLellan discovered that adding a pair of amino acids to a key joint of a vaccine's spike protein could stabilise "the structure's prefusion shape," *Chemical & Engineering News*, a publication of the American Chemical Society, reported last year.

This tweak — called the 2P mutation — worked in preclinical studies for the MERS vaccine candidate developed by Graham and the biotech company Moderna. "The 2P mutation might quite literally be the smallest detail that could make or break the first generation of COVID-19 vaccines." *C&EN* wrote in Sept.

Vaccines from Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, Novavax, CureVac and Pfizer-BioNTech rely on the 2P mutation.

The Times cited lawyers and health experts who said that the patent will likely force companies to come to the negotiating table to agree to licensing deals with the government, or face hugely expensive lawsuits.

Smiles & winks can add more layers to face recognition tech

TECHNOLOGY

NEW YORK: As hackers find ways to unlock your phone with your face while you sleep or using a photo from social media to do the same, researchers have developed a way to strengthen security by adding facial features such as smiles and winks to the mix.

D.J. Lee, a professor at Brigham Young University, who has filed a patent on this already, said the idea is not to compete with Apple or have the application be all about smartphone access. The new system is called Concurrent Two-Factor Identity Verification (C2FIV) and it requires both one's facial identity and a specific facial motion.

To set it up, a user faces a camera and records a short 1-2 second video of either a unique facial motion or a lip movement from reading a secret phrase.

C2FIV relies on an integrated neural network framework.

FACT OF THE MATTER

Lower intake at US univs

EDUCATION

The pandemic and a flurry of immigration-related directives from the last US administration devastated enrolment of international students at US educational institutions in 2020, media report said. The number of international students, on their F-1 or M-1 visas, fell by 18% last year, to 1.25 million, according to a new tally by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Student and Exchange Visitor Program, which manages the Department of Homeland Security's student visa monitoring system. Visa records for newly enrolled students tumbled by 72%.

Traffic system for drones

TECHNOLOGY

Israel is expected to develop a national artificial intelligence control room that manages all the country's drone traffic by the beginning of 2023. On Wednesday, Israeli authorities demonstrated the first national air test in which a group of drones, operated by their respective companies from a control room about 50 km away, flew simultaneously at a distance of a few meters away from each other, Xinhua reported. The flight tasks performed at the same time by the drones in shared small air space included lifting equipment, shooting videos and delivering goods.

Virus variants have sturdy spike protein

RESEARCH

BOSTON: The spike protein of the coronavirus, which enables it to infect human cells, is more stable in faster spreading variants of the virus, compared to the original form of the pathogen from Wuhan, says a new study. Researchers assessed the structure of the coronavirus spike protein and found how it changed with the D614G mutation which is carried by the Brazil, South Africa and UK variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

The results in *Science* showed that the mutation makes the spike more stable as compared with the original virus, enabling the variants to spread more quickly.

The spike proteins in the original virus would bind to the ACE2 receptor on human cells, and then change shape, enabling the virus to fuse its membrane with host cells. The spikes would sometimes prematurely change shape and fall.

TENDING THE FLOCK

A young shepherd strides alongside his family's goats on a highway on the outskirts of Ahmedabad | PTI

EXPRESS READ

Oil firm sets out to scrub CO2 from air

NEW YORK: Removing carbon dioxide from the air is seen as crucial to reducing the worst impacts of global warming, and the world's largest effort to do that on a commercial scale is coming from an unlikely source: a Texas oil company, Occidental Petroleum.

SERIOUS DISARRAY

Rapid coronavirus vaccine rollout backfires in some US states, analysis finds

MEDICINE

DESPITE the push to speed up the US vaccination drive against Covid-19, the first three months of the rollout suggest faster is not necessarily better.

A surprising new analysis found that states such as South Carolina, Florida and Missouri that raced ahead of others to offer the vaccine to ever-larger groups of people have vaccinated smaller shares of their population than those that moved slowly and methodically, such as Hawaii and Connecticut.

The explanation, as experts see it, is that the rapid expansion of eligibility caused a surge in demand too big for some states to handle and led to serious disarray. Vaccine supplies proved insufficient or unpredictable, websites crashed and phone lines became jammed, spreading confusion, frustration and resignation among many people.

"The infrastructure just wasn't ready. It kind of backfired," said Dr. Rebecca Wurtz, an infectious disease physician and health data specialist at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health. She added: "In the rush to satisfy everyone, governors satisfied few and frustrated many."

US Army health specialists fill syringes with the Pfizer vaccine in Miami | AP

The findings could contain an important go-slow lesson for administrators elsewhere in the world. "If you're more targeted and more focused, you can do a better job," said Sema Sgaier, executive director of Surgo Ventures, a nonprofit health-data organization that conducted the analysis in collaboration with The AP. "You can open it up — if you have set up the infrastructure to vaccinate all those people fast."

Numerous factors stymied state vaccination performance. Conspiracy theories, poor communication and undependable shipments slowed efforts after the first vials of precious vaccine arrived Dec. 14.

But the size of the eligible population was always within the control of state officials, who made widely varying decisions about how many people they invited to get in line when there wasn't enough vaccine to go around. When the drive began, most states put health care workers and nursing home residents at the front of the line. In doing so, states were abiding by national recommendations from experts who also suggested doing everything possible to reach everyone in those two groups before moving on to the next categories.

But faced with political pressure and a clamor from the public, governors rushed ahead. Both the outgoing Trump administration and the incoming Biden team urged opening vaccinations to older Americans.

By late Jan, more than half the states had opened up to older adults — some 75 and above, others 65 and up. That's when the real problems started. South Carolina expanded eligibility to people in Steven Kite's age group Jan. 13. Kite, 71, immediately booked a vaccination at a hospital. But the next day, his appointment was cancelled along with thousands of others because of a shortage of vaccine. "It was frustrating at first," Kite said. After a week of uncertainty, he rescheduled. He and his wife are now vaccinated. "It ended up working out fine. I know they've had other problems."

BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE

EXPRESS CONNECTS

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MONDAY

DAY'S DIARY

PM resigns

India's first (and so far, only) female Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, who served the post for 15 years, resigned on this day in 1977

FALL FROM POWER

Public opposition to Gandhi's two years of emergency rule was widespread. In early 1977, and the long-postponed national parliamentary elections were held. She and her party were soundly defeated

AS A PM

She is the second longest serving PM of India, after her father, Jawaharlal Nehru. During her first term as PM, she nationalised 14 banks

OTHER POSTS

While in office, she also held the post of Minister for Atomic Energy (September 1967 to March 1977), of Home Affairs (June 1970 to November 1973) and for Space (June 1972 to March 1977)

Kotigobba 3 pre-release event to be held in Chitradurga

PG 4

PIC| MEGHANA SASTRY

Tasks on WhatsApp, virtual meetings and guidance... Online internships may be safer during a second Covid wave but students are worried about missing out on real-world experience

TO LOG IN OR LOG OUT?

Oshin Shah

SANATH PRASAD

THE fear of a second wave of Covid-19 has left everyone worried. With many colleges soon wrapping up their semester exams, students are left wondering how they will spend their summer holidays and whether an internship is possible or not. While online internships have gained popularity, it has garnered different responses.

Oshin Shah, a second-year mass communication student, interned with an education management firm based in Noida. She started her internship in October 2020 but found it stressful, with limited social interaction. This month, Shah quit the internship. "I taught children English. However, I was spending a total of eight hours on screens for the internship and online classes," says Shah, who is now looking for offline opportunities instead.

Some believe online internships will not support them in the long term. Jai Sham, a final-year mass communication student, is not even considering it because he believes ground work helps him network better and understand job dynamics. Others, however, have found the situation to benefit them. Roopashree BR, placement coordinator for NMKRV Degree College for Women, says, "Initially students found it difficult because online work requires more internet support than classes. However, they managed." According to her, online internships in digital marketing, content writing and counselling internships were more in number.

Lalitha Shree, who has been interning with a branding company for three months, says, "Working from home is serving its purpose. However, it does create a communication gap between the organisation and me. It has impacted my communication skills and I have become more of an introvert after spending time on screens," she says. Dhanush MK, a second-year MBA student, who is keen to take up an internship in finance also believes online internships have one drawback: Communication. "Apart from this, an online internship in finance is manageable. Whether it is auditing or analysing stock market data, it requires appropriate software and trading platforms to manage the work online."

Sarthak Baijal, CEO of a brand consultancy firm in Bengaluru, personally finds face-to-face interactions to enhance the performance. "However, the current situation is best aligned with online work. We have had interns for a year now and their performance has not been hit. But going forward, I would not recommend online internships as the only way," he says.

A similar thought is echoed by Prashant Pandey, country manager, Right Management India, which is a part of ManpowerGroup. The company is hiring 3-5 summer interns across offices at Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi. A blended approach, feels Pandey, is what will serve students and employers best. "Market research or desk analysis are possible online but in live client projects, in-person work experience works well," he says.

Internships expose students to real-life situations, help them network and allow them to showcase skills that could turn into a permanent placement. If the internship is completely online, that's an opportunity loss for them

— Prashant Pandey, country manager, Right Management India

HOW IT WORKS

An online internship allows students to work from home and engage with the organisation virtually. Students are usually given their day-to-day tasks on WhatsApp or through official email IDs. The organisations often holds virtual meetings to instruct and guide the interns. The work format, however, varies from one organisation to another, considering the nature of the industry.

Natasha Celmi, a city-based chef, cookbook author and food blogger, dishes out fun food related trivia in this weekly series. So, test your knowledge and find out how much of a foodie you are.

GRUB HUB

THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'**

The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in *CE* on Monday. The first prize winner this week will also receive a voucher worth ₹2,400 (approx) for 'Taste of Yauatcha', a six-course lunch for 2, at Yauatcha**

THE RIGHT ANSWERS

1. Vidyarthi Bhavan started out as a students' eatery.
2. Benne dose and Rave idli
3. Bisi Bele Bath

THE FIRST THREE RESPONDENTS TO GET IT RIGHT ARE

Dr Dwarakanath Srinivas
Madhumathi P. Datti
Anand S V

**Conditions apply

Sound of musical diplomacy

EXPRESS FEATURES

THE world's largest democracy, India, and the world's oldest democracy, the United States of America, have shared social, economic and political partnership over the years. Now, music too has become central to diplomacy. City-based ghatam player **Giridhar Udupa** and the US Air Force Band of the Pacific have collaborated to form 'Open Clusters'. The band is a squadron of professional U S Air Force musicians who perform in diverse musical configurations.

The Hawaii-based band released a music video on March 17, featuring defence personnel, including senior airman Guy James on guitar, staff sergeant Andrew Detra on bass, technical sergeant Cruz on percussion, and Udupa on ghatam. The collaboration is an initiative of the US Consulate General based in Chennai to support Aero India 2021. The three-minute and 12-second video blends animation and realistic presentation of the artistes. "I am glad that music was central to diplomacy where a blend of classical and western-style fusion could produce world music scene," says Udupa.

The birth of Open Clusters took place when the band wanted to perform at Aero India 2021 in Bengaluru, but had to shelve it due to Covid-19 restrictions. Technical Sergeant Wilfredo Cruz says, "The pandemic did not allow us to perform in India yet music connects all regardless of distance or borders. We leverage music to strengthen bonds with friends and partners through the Indo-Pacific region."

Catch-up time

They say even time can't come in the way of the best of friendships. This seems to be true for Anita Nair, who recently met her old friends. "The best thing about catching up with friends who you know for the last 30 years is the seamless conversation, the giggles, the exchange of details of co-morbidities, aging parents and knowing that all excess is accepted without judgement. Be it margaritas, apple pie or life".

CITY READ

REVA University organises event

REVA University's event, 'Imprint', was envisioned to showcase the accomplishments of the schools of the university and introduce the uniqueness of each school to stakeholders. "The School of Commerce and Management Studies started with a small team of 150 students and staff but has expanded into this big school with over 2,000 students and faculty. Many of our alumni are now entrepreneurs with their own startups and it is delightful to see their growth and achievements," said chancellor Dr P Shyama Raju.

Online art auction to be held

AstaGuru will present its Modern Indian Art online auction on March 30 and 31. The auction catalogue features a carefully curated set of 30 eminent works in the Modern Indian Art landscape from works by by artists such as V S Gaitonde, Tyeb Mehta, Akbar Padamsee, Manjit Bawa, Jogen Chowdhury, and Jagdish Swaminathan, to name a few.

Hospital sets up emergency services

Sakra World Hospital has tied up with Hyderabad-based Stan Plus, RED Ambulance to initiate a new emergency service. Inaugurated by Sunil Agarwal, IPS, Additional DGP (Karnataka State Fire & Emergency Services), the service aims to be available, accessible and provide affordable medical emergency care with a quick response time of less than a minute. It also has GPS-enabled tracking system with optimised and centralised operations.

Making a statement

Netizens have been up in arms after a politician's recent statement about women and ripped jeans. Anuja Chauhan decided to air her views in her own quirky style. The city-based writer recently put up a photo of her casually rocking a team India jersey and ripped jeans. When someone left a comment about team #NikhilKhoda (the main heartthrob in Chauhan's The Zoya Factor, who is also the captain of the Indian cricket team), she replied: "haha. Was kind of focussing on the jeans here, however!".

PAGES FROM HISTORY

Once a dilapidated building, Fort High School, which was the first high school for boys built in 1907, has been through a renovation, restoring its old-world charm

MONIKA MONALISA

What's a city without its history? Paintings on the wall, markets where people shop or even buildings that are centuries-old... all of this speak of a story that take you back in time. Fort High School in Chamrajpet is one such building, which recently underwent a renovation and was handed over to the Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar on March 20.

Once in dilapidated condition, the building, which was constructed in 1907, now bears a new look, thanks to an initiative by the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH). Though the actual construction started in April 2018, the inception of the idea began in 2011. Meera Iyer, convenor, INTACH, says it took one visit to the building to understand the need for urgent restoration. "The initial days involved going to different offices to arrange funds. But there was hardly any positive response from the government's side," recalls Iyer, adding that all they got was permission to work on the building, with the condition that cost would be borne by INTACH. Luck was on their side when Basant Poddar, chairperson, Mineral Enterprises Limited, who, despite not being an alumnus of the school, decided to fund a major part of the project.

The 114-year-old building needed a good amount of work because of the damage due to seepage of water, and negligence. But as they investigated further, they unearthed the deep-rooted problems. "There were water tanks installed in odd places which resulted in leakages. When the building was constructed, there was no concept of an attached bathroom, but with modern requirements, the management included it without much planning. This also led to plants growing in the building which had roots that were 10-feet long," says Iyer, adding that the cost of the project was around ₹2.8 crore. They used Mangalore tiles to replace old, broken ones, and had to change wooden beams in the ceiling which were originally made of teak wood. When INTACH took over the project, the building was cream coloured. But as they researched and spoke to old-timers, they found that the building was red and white in colour, which is what it is now.

INTACH also looked into other requirements. "For instance, after a midday meal, there was no place to clean vessels. Also, since the school had a laboratory without water supply, we made sure to fix this," says Iyer.

She hopes that one day the public is allowed to enter the school to experience its history. But until then, she is happy that there are still some who are keen to preserve heritage buildings.

PICS| MEGHANA SASTRY

The initial days went in going to different offices to arrange for funds. But there was hardly any positive response from the government's side

Meera Iyer, convenor, INTACH

MANGO SPECIAL

Summer is here, which means it's time to indulge in mangoes. In light of this, a city-based Bengali restaurant will serve dishes, drinks and desserts made using raw mango, like Aam Pora Sharbat, Aam Chanar Cutlet, Aam Kashundi Begun, etc.
Where: Esplanade, Indiranagar
When: Ongoing

ONLINE EXHIBITION

InKo Centre presents Chaekgado - constructing and de-constructing perspectives, an exhibition by Lim Soosik at Prism, in their virtual gallery. Chaekgado or chaekgeori refers to still-life paintings, mainly books and other related objects such as decorative bibelot, antiques, stationery and flowers. The exhibition can be viewed online **till March 31** at www.inkocentre.org/Virtual_Connect_Infotainment.html

LITERARY EVENT

Ranga Shankara will hold a literary event centered on playwright and director Abhishek Majumdar. The event will celebrate the launch of his three English plays - *The Djinns of Eidgah, Harlesden High Street*, and *Pah-La*.
When: March 28, 11am
Where: Ranga Shankara , JP Nagar

BIRYANI TIME

Ssaffron is bringing together 'Flavours of Royalty', a special biryani menu from across the country. It will offer Ambur Mutton Biryani, Bhavnagri Chilli Bharvan Biryani, Mughlai Murgh Biryani and more. **When:** Till March 28
Where: Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru, Palace Road

BOW-WOW: CHECK OUT THIS 4-COURSE BRUNCH, DESIGNED SPECIALLY FOR YOUR FURRY FRIENDS. **WHEN & WHERE:** MARCH 28; TRIPPY GOAT CAFE & WINE

Japanese special

Head to this restaurant to enjoy dishes from the Land of the Rising Sun. The menu includes Don Buri and Robatayaki specials, along with sake cocktails.
When: Till March 28 **Where:** Mikusu, Conrad Bengaluru

Theme brunch

Enjoy a Holi-themed brunch with dishes like chilled Thandai, Aam Panna, Vodka Shot Golgappa and desserts like Jalebi with Masala Doodh, Gujiya , Gur Pare and Bhapa doi.
When: JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru, Vittal Mallya Road
Where: March 28

Holi thali

With Holi round the corner, Khandani Rajdhani presents Rangeelo Rajasthan festival from March 26 to March 29. There will be seasonal holi dishes on a rotational basis, with the thali. Thandai and Guiyas will be served as a part of the curated Holi menu. **For details, call:** 66650317

FASHION FIESTA

Since International Women's Day is celebrated in March, Madhurya Creations has an ongoing month-long sale. It has dupattas, stoles and shawls in a host of weaves including silk, cotton, organza, Benarasi, Kota, chiffon, bandini and more.
When: Till month end
Where: Madhurya Creations, Kanakapura Main Road

Young talent music fest

The Bharatiya Samagana Sabha is organising Namasthubhyam, a 'young talent music festival'. It is dedicated to young musicians and the performers include Uthara Unnikrishnan, Spoorthi Rao, Rahul Vellal and Nandini Gaikwad. When: March 27 and 28. **Where:** Chowdiah Memorial Hall
Tickets: BookMyShow.

Happy feet

Bugatti has recently unveiled their Spring-Summer collection 2021. Their women's collection includes White silver leather oxford, Rose reptile print platform sneakers, Pastel coloured lace-up sneakers and Cognac mules. They are priced from ₹6,499 to ₹7,999. **Available at:** www.iconicindia.com

For the planet

Hard Rock Cafe St Marks Road is gearing up to observe Earth Hour. As part of this, Moksha All Stars will be performing. The event begins with an hour of darkness as the cafe goes candle-lit. The showcase will go acoustic during Earth Hour, followed by a complete set for the evening.
When: March 27, 8.30pm
Where: Hard Rock Cafe, St Marks Road

QUICK FIX

What's cooking

IN YOUR KITCHEN?
We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at cityexpresschn@gmail.com.

GARLIC MUSHROOMS

INGREDIENTS

- **Button mushrooms:** 200 g
- **Garlic:** 20, finely chopped
- **Onion:** 1 medium, finely chopped
- **Salt, black pepper:** as per taste
- **Red chilli powder:** 1 tbsp
- **Vinegar:** 1/2 tsp
- **Oregano, coriander or parsley**

METHOD

- Rinse and clean mushrooms thoroughly. Rinse with water and set aside.
- Heat a pan, add 2 tbsp butter, add 2 tsp oil. Add finely chopped garlic. Add chopped onion.
- Saute well till it turns golden brown.
- Add mushrooms. Add salt, black pepper.
- Stir and toss well. Add red chilli powder, oregano, vinegar, coriander and parsley.
- Mix and serve hot.

— Sushma, Bengaluru

FIT BIT

ARDHA GANDA BHERUNDASANA

(HALF FORMIDABLE FACE POSE)

In Sanskrit, 'ardha' means half, 'ganda' means face, 'bherunda' means formidable, and 'asana' means pose. It refers to a bird (like an eagle) which has two heads/face and is believed to possess magical strength. Our lifestyle directly impacts our vitality. Yoga is the key to enhance your physical, mental and emotional vitality. The Half Formidable Face pose tones the body muscles and massages abdominal organs. Yoga is the key to enhance your physical, mental and emotional vitality. It stimulates Muladhara (Root) Chakra which represents the foundation of your mind and opens Svadhisthana (Sacral) Chakra, which is energetic, emotionally stable and connected, compassionate and experiences true joy in life.

STEPS

- Lie flat on your stomach and place your chin on the floor.
- Bring your hands next your hips and face your palms down or up.
- Curl your toes inward. Inhale and lift your right leg up. Keep you knee straight and point your toes towards the ceiling.
- Exhale and bend your right knee to point your toes towards the back of your head.
- Inhale and lift your leg further up till your knee faces the ceiling.
- Lift your hips up and press your chin on the floor.
- At this stage, you can gaze forward and stay in this pose for 3 to 6 long breaths.
- To come out of this pose, bring your leg down and rest in Advasana/Reverse Corpse Pose.
- Repeat the sequence on your other side for the same length of time.

BENEFITS

- Stretches and strengthens the spine.
- Helps in massaging the abdominal organs.
- The lower body muscles could be toned.
- Good for improving blood circulation.
- Maintains a good body balance.
- Gives immediate relief for back pain.
- Stretches the hips and waist region.
- Strengthens the thighs, stretches the arms and reduces body pain.
- Stretches the chest and lungs, and maintains a good respiratory system.
- Stimulates the nerve centres and glands in the pelvic, chest and the throat area.

LIMITATIONS

- Anyone suffering from neck, shoulder, arms, ribs, hips, lower back pain, neck injury or a severe headache, must avoid this.
- Awareness of the movement is very essential.
- Always take guidance from a yoga expert.
- Pregnant women must avoid.

— by N Elumalai, PhD scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai

SOUND BOARD

THE MUSAFIR STORIES- INDIA TRAVEL PODCAST

The Musafir Stories talks about iconic and, in fact, all sorts of travel destinations. The podcast series is hosted by Saif Omar and Faiza Khan who talk to fellow travellers about their various adventures across India. It sounds like a good, authentic conversation between people and is quite informative as well.
- Available on Spotify

MAED IN INDIA

Maed in India prides itself on being India's first indie music podcast and features conversations with, well, independent musicians from India and abroad. From unreleased music to unknown music stories, they have it all. It's great for discovering new music, too.
- Available on Spotify

VANAKKAM MAKKALE

Perspectives of diasporic Tamils from Germany, for the world to hear. It is a weekly podcast by Nanda and Karthik, two professionals from two different fields coming together to showcase their little known humor and also to discuss on some very serious topics.
- Available on Apple Podcasts

THE SANDIP ROY SHOW

What makes people tick? What are the stories they carry with them? In a world of shouting heads, veteran journalist, radio commentator and novelist Sandip Roy sits down to have real conversations about the fascinating world around us and the people who shape it. Catch these engaging interviews every other Sunday.
- Available on Spotify

POPULAR ON YOUTUBE

KHUSHI KHUSHIYAGI

Raj, who belongs to an affluent family, meets Priya at an event and is spellbound by her beauty. He loses her number, which leads to a string of confusions.
- Cast: Ganesh, Amulya, Nandini Rai

MR AIRAVATA

Airavata, a farmer who was wronged by a few corrupt police officers, decides to take matters into his own hands and joins the police force through wrong means.
- Cast: Darshan, Urvashi Rautela, Prakash Raj

JAANU

Siddarth helps Rukmini reach home when she runs out of money on a trip. Rukmini's family attack Siddarth, but welcome him after learning the truth. Both fall in love, but a surprise awaits them.
- Cast: Yash, Deepa Sannidhi, Rangayana Raghu

JODI

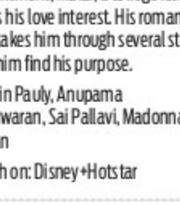
Kannan falls in love with Gayathri but both decide to win the hearts of each other's family members and marry with their consent.
- Cast: Prashanth, Simran, Nassar, Trisha

Scan this QR code to find out how your favourite celebs are coping with the lockdown.

WHAT'S ON TED TALKS

1 A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN AZTEC MIDWIFE BY KAY READ

The midwife Xoquauhtli has a difficult choice to make. She owes a debt to her patron Teteoinnan, the female warrior goddess at the center of the Aztec seasonal festival. Xoquauhtli should participate in the festival today, but one of her patients could go into labor any minute.

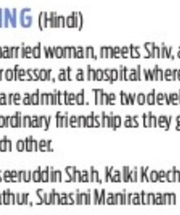


2 ONLINE LEARNING COULD CHANGE ACADEMIA — FOR GOOD BY TYLER DEWITT

Educator Tyler DeWitt explains how innovations in digital content and virtual reality are ushering in the future of learning, emphasising why academia must adapt to this new reality and embrace an approach to education that works with students' needs — not against them.

3 HOW TO SPOT A LIAR BY PAMELA MEYER

On any given day we're lied to from 10 to 200 times, and the clues to detect those lies can be subtle and counter-intuitive. Pamela Meyer, author of Liespotting, shows the manners and "hotspots" used by those trained to recognize deception — and she argues honesty is a value worth preserving.



4 GET COMFORTABLE WITH BEING UNCOMFORTABLE BY LUVVIE AJAYI JONES

Luvvie Ajayi Jones isn't afraid to speak her mind or to be the one dissenting voice in a crowd, and neither should you. In this bright, uplifting talk, Ajayi Jones shares three questions to ask yourself if you're teetering on the edge of speaking up or quieting down, and encourages all of us to get a little more comfortable with being uncomfortable.

5 HOW RACIAL BIAS WORKS — AND HOW TO DISRUPT IT BY JENNIFER L EBERHARDT

Psychologist Jennifer L. Eberhardt explores how our biases unfairly target Black people at all levels of society — from schools and social media to policing and criminal justice — and discusses how creating points of friction can help us address this troubling problem.

NOW STREAMING

REGIONAL

AVANE SRIMANNARAYANA (Kannada)

In pursuit of solving a long-held mystery of Amaravati, Narayana -- the quirky new cop in the town -- has to get past a dreaded clan of dacoits and its fierce leader Jairam.
- Cast: Rakshit Shetty, Shanvi Srivastava, Achyuth Kumar
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

GIRL ON THE TRAIN (Hindi)

A recent divorcee spends her daily commute fantasising about a seemingly perfect couple who live in a house that her train passes daily, until something shocking happens there one day.
Cast: Parineeti Chopra, Aditi Rao Hydari, Kirti Kulhari, Avinash Tiwary
- Watch on: Netflix

WEEKEND (Kannada)

Set in the modern world, the story revolves around techies with employment and ones without. Among these two groups, a techie Ajay who is raised masterfully good by his grandfather Anant Ram, will be leading a happy life. But on a particular weekend a certain mysterious things starts to unfold around these two which will change their lives and others lives too.
- Cast: Milind, Sanjana Burli, Anant Nag
- Watch on: Amazon Prime

ENTHA MANCHIVAADAVURAA (Telugu)

Balu grows up without the love of a family due to his parents' untimely death. Later, he decides to establish a firm to help people like himself receive the affection they missed out on.
Cast: Meherene Kaur Pirzada, Baladitya, Pooja Ramachandran, Pavitra Lokesh
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

KILOMETRES & KILOMETRES (Malayalam)

A poor tour guide from Kerala takes an American client on a journey through India. During their travels, the changing landscapes and experiences help them reshape their understanding of each other.
Cast: Tovino Thomas, India Jarvis, Sidhartha Siva, Basil Joseph
- Watch on: Netflix

All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.

PREMAM (Malayalam)

While George's first love turns out to be a disappointment, Malar, a college lecturer, rekindles his love interest. His romantic journey takes him through several stages, helping him find his purpose.
Cast: Nivin Pauly, Anupama Parameswaran, Sai Pallavi, Madonna Sebastian
- Watch on: Disney+Hotstar

WAITING (Hindi)

Tara, a married woman, meets Shiv, an elderly professor, at a hospital where their spouses are admitted. The two develop an extraordinary friendship as they get to know each other.
Cast: Naseeruddin Shah, Kalki Koechlin, Arjun Mathur, Suhasini Maniratnam
- Watch on: Netflix

ENGLISH

PIECES OF A WOMAN

A heartbreaking home birth leaves a woman grappling with the profound emotional fallout, isolated from her partner and family by a chasm of grief.
Cast: Vanessa Kirby, Shia LaBeouf, Ellen Burstyn, Molly Parker
- Watch on: Netflix

MANK

1930s Hollywood is reevaluated through the eyes of scathing wit and alcoholic screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz as he races to finish "Citizen Kane."
Cast: Gary Oldman, Amanda Seyfried, Lily Collins, Tom Burke, Tuppence Middleton
- Watch on: Netflix

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

Tensions rise when trailblazing blues singer Ma Rainey and her band gather at a recording studio in Chicago in 1927.
Cast: Chadwick Boseman, Viola Davis, Taylour Paige, Glynn Turman
- Watch on: Netflix

THE BOY

Greta accepts the job of a nanny for a wealthy couple's child and is disturbed when she finds out the child is a doll. However, when she mishandles the doll, she is shocked to find that it is alive.
Cast: Lauren Cohan, Katie Holmes, James Russell, Rupert Evans
- Watch on: Amazon Prime Video

SUBSCRIPTION
Prime Video: ₹ 129 per month
Netflix: ₹ 199 per month
Disney+Hotstar: ₹ 399 per year

Of colours and care

PAIRED WITH PANACHE
Anuja Pandey

Holi, the spring festival of colours, is just around the corner. The festival is a lot of fun but it sure can leave your skin parched and hair dry and brittle. Deepika Padukone may be able to get away with looking good with gulal on her face in *Balam Pichkari* but we all may not. There's no denying the damaging effects of chemical-laden colours and dyes. So here's a checklist of things to do before and after the festival, which can ensure your skin and hair suffer minimal damage.

Mane matters

PRE-PARTY: Jawed Habib, who has recently launched his products for preconditioning, says, "Moisturising is one of the best methods to keep your hair healthy and bouncy. You typically slather a small quantity of pre-conditioner on your mane, let it sit for up to 30 minutes, and shampoo and condition as usual. The result? Shinier and more hydrated tresses." If you are planning any treatments like rebonding or highlights, do it once Holi is over. Hair PRP (platelet-rich plasma) is a non-surgical treatment that can help with texture of hair so you could get a few sessions done for overall improvement. Oiling from root to tip is necessary to avoid frizzy and dry hair, which is a natural consequence of Holi. A mix of coconut oil, castor oil and olive oil massaged a night before could save you hours of washing after the festival. A neat braid is furthermore protective and easy to manage, where a bandana or cap goes a step further in keeping damage at bay.

POST-PARTY: Black cardamom is rich in antioxidants and has anti-bacterial properties. Using cardamom water as a last wash after conditioning takes care of any scalp irritation. You can also try this hair pack to retain smoothness. Mash half an avocado. Mix one tablespoon of honey and three tablespoons of olive oil to it and apply to hair and scalp.

Leave in for an hour and then shampoo and condition your hair.

For the skin

PRE-PARTY: Makeup can actually give the skin a protective layer, thus preventing direct exposure to harmful toxins in colours. Wear SPF 50+ and top it with a layer of olive oil and foundation. Rub ice cubes to minimise the pores and save colour from settling in the skin. Avoid facials, threading or peels before Holi. It will only make your skin more sensitive and prone to breakouts.

POST-PARTY: While there is no dearth of DIY packs, it's a good idea to consult your skin dermatologist. Dr Karishma Kagodu, cosmetic surgeon, says, "Post-Holi care requires special attention in order to get healthy and glowing skin back. Homemade face packs (besan, curd and honey) or other DIY methods are not enough because everyone has different skin requirements that require personalised attention." Therefore, it is mandatory to know what contents or composition of ingredients will suit your skin.

She continues, "An expert opinion from your skin specialist is crucial before you undergo any treatment. If you do suffer from any pre-existing skin ailment for which you are already getting treated, then do visit your specialist for advice."

(The writer is a social media influencer)

VIRAL WITH VISUALS

City-based cinematographer Abhimanyu Sadanandan takes us behind the making of the popular Indie track *Enjoy Enjaami*, which has received over 43 million views on YouTube

TUNING IN

Enjoy Enjaami is the first album from Maajja, the record label by A R Rahman to support independent artistes

The song speaks about the history of oppression, exploitation and labour, which goes 200 years back

The song refers to Valliamma, who is Arivu's grandmother

MONIKA MONALISA

MOVE over *Waka Waka* by Shakira or *Tip Toe* by Jason Derulo. Here's the latest song that everyone seems to be grooving to these days. Rapper Arivu and singer Dhee (of Tamil song *Rowdy Baby* fame) have come out with a new song, *Enjoy Enjaami*, which is now going viral, with over 43 million people having viewed it on YouTube. While the song's beats are impossible to miss, the visuals are equally captivating. Some of the credit for this goes to city-based Abhimanyu Sadanandan, who was the cinematographer for the video.

Sadanandan reveals that the video was shot in two parts and by two cinematographers – him and Balaji Subramanian. Ask him if he expected the song to be such a hit and he says while the team hoped for a good response, no one imagined it to blow up this much. "When we heard the song, we knew it was going to be popular especially among the youth. But we didn't anticipate the fame it has received," says Sadanandan, who shot the forest portions of the song.

The song, which was directed by Amith Krishnan from Studio MOCA, required the team to brainstorm to get the concept right. "We had to get the idea clear. My segment, which was the jungle part, was set in the studio, where we had to create as much of the real effect as we could. So, one of the most important aspects was getting the lighting right," says the 29-year-old. The challenges didn't stop there. "When you make a music video, it's not just the beats but also the visuals that hold an equal importance. The music was already catchy and now the onus was on us to come up with good visuals, something that would stay in the minds of people," says Sadanandan, who was also the cinematographer for the Kannada movie *Mundina Nildana*, starring Praveen Tej, Radhika Chetan and Ananya Kashyap.

> *The music was already catchy and now the onus was on us to come up with good visuals, something that would stay in the minds of people*
> Abhimanyu Sadanandan, cinematographer

Stills from the music video

CITY READ

Educational institute celebrates nod for its PGDM programme

St. Joseph's Institute of Management (SJIM) commemorated 25 years since it received AICTE approval for its flagship two-year full-time post graduate programme in management with a celebration on Thursday. The programme began with an address by Dr Anantharaman, provost, SJIM. Dr Manoj D'Souza S J then led the felicitation of the dignitaries. The chief guest of the event was AICTE chairman prof. Dr Anil D Sahasrabudhe.

ARE YOU GAME?
Anusha Ganapathi

(This economics graduate spends her leisure time preparing for the zombie apocalypse)

Algorithm recommended: Mobile games on-the-go

This week's column could have been about a lot of things: Mar10 day, Call of Duty Mobile Season 2 (and speculations on PUBG Mobile India release date), or PS5 restocks. However, I felt the time was right for another mobile games-on-the-go update. This quarter, I decided to leave the recommendations to my social media algorithm. I scrolled. I scrolled like it was a game of lucky slots, waiting for an advertisement to pop on my screen. I waited patiently for the loud ad of a videogame.

Did the data thieves know what I wanted?

GAME 1 Gardenscapes: I was pleasantly surprised by this game. The developer has released more in the series – including Homescapes and Wildscapes. Gardenscapes is Candy Crush with a relatable story and more cutscenes. It is also a more rewarding Candy Crush, because at the end of every level, you use shiny golden stars that you earn, to improve the garden. There are also other cute puzzles that you encounter along the way of building a pretty garden. What I liked best was Austin's slow claps of appreciation every time I finished a minigame. Would I continue to play Gardenscapes? Yes.

GAME 2 Fun Race 3D: I initially wanted to review this game called 'Episodes'. Admit it: you came across this on Instagram too, and was curious about the stories it held. However, Episodes is dipped in too much cringe for me to objectively review the game, so I recommend playing Fun Race 3D, instead. You are matched with a player 'online' to run across a road with obstacles. You win to progress. Simple, easy, and a lot of fun. The only criticism by all players of this game were the incessant ads. I am not complaining, because the in-game ads helped me find –

GAME 3 Hill Climb Racing: The data thieves found me a real winner with this game based on unrealistic physics. It also has amazing music to back it up. Hill Climb Racing's music, while getting repetitive after a point, still provides the illusion that you are doing something that involves more complexity than what really is. You try to beat your own score on the extremely rough terrains and upgrade your vehicle to continue moving ahead.

While they are entertaining, I still rank these free games a 'hmmm' out of a total of 'wow'. Let us hope the data thieves read this article and suggest better games next quarter.

PLAY ON
Arjun Sukumaran

(Arjun is a gamer, book lover and an all-round renaissance man)

Conquer the throne

DICE Throne is unashamed of wearing its heart on its sleeve when it comes to its inspirations. Let's start with the backstory, which features a mad tyrant who organises a tournament and...if you're not already humming the Mortal Kombat theme by this point, I'm not sure what more you need. In gameplay terms as well, it's easy to trace this game's lineage and what it's derived from; but it's a surprise what those games are and how it manages to blend them.

Before carrying on, a word on Dice Throne's catalogue — in the beginning, there was a single boxed set called Season 1 which was followed by the inevitable Season 2. However, it was also decided to release each four 'battle boxes' alongside that second set, each featuring two of the characters from Season 2 going head-to-head in a smaller box. This was and remains a great move, because it allows you to try Dice Throne and see if you like it at a much lower price point.

Although you can play Dice Throne at higher player counts, I'll largely be treating it as a 1v1 game today because that feels like the most natural fit for it. Each of the players will begin by selecting a character from the available roster — you've got a Wild West-style gunslinger, a formidable samurai, an Amazonian warrior, a Doctor Octopus-esque mad scientist, a vampire lord, a cursed pirate and...the list goes on, but you get the idea. Once you grab your character's board, deck of cards and dice, you're ready to go. Each of you starts with 50 health, and whoever manages to reduce their opponent's health to 0, wins.

For most of its turn structure, Dice Throne feels quite reminiscent of many other games of this genre; most notably, a little card game called Magic: The Gathering. You'll resolve start-of-turn effects, draw a card and gain the equivalent of mana before you enter a 'main phase'. Here's where things start to get interesting — your board consists a series of skills that you can activate with your dice later on in the turn, and some of the cards in your deck are straight upgrades of those skills. So as a game of Dice Throne progresses, your character goes through an evolution of sorts, which is always a cool idea when it's executed as well as this. There are other card types, but those are more straightforward fare. Whenever you're done, you move on to the combat phase where the game suddenly flips the script.

You see, in the combat phase, you're effectively playing a game of Yahtzee with your character's dice, trying to get various combinations in order to activate the skills on your board. Many games have used Yahtzee's dice rolling as a foundation — King of Tokyo comes to mind — because it's a system that works so well, and it's no different here. This is where the differences between characters make themselves felt — the gunslinger feels nimble and harder to hit while she keeps up a constant rain of fire, for example, whereas the samurai feels like a slower-moving tank of sorts but you definitely don't want to let him get within striking distance. It's a phenomenal mix of theme and gameplay, and it feels incredibly smooth to play.

All this, and I haven't even spoken about how Dice Throne plays as a free-for-all or team-vs-team game! There's a good reason for that, though — it's because I've never played either of those modes. I'm sure they're good, but let's be honest here; if you buy this, you're doing so because of how it plays as a 1v1 head-to-head duel. It's a crowded genre of game, true, but Dice Throne is an absolute gem and it's one of the best games I've played recently.

WHAT'S NEW?

FOSSILIS

The Kickstarter edition of Fossilis just arrived and, even just on the basis of a first impression alone, this has to be one of the nicest productions I'll see in 2021. It's a wonderfully aesthetic package, with a tonne of extra content, and a first play suggests that it's a charming and accessible archaeological romp.

SMART ADS

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SUDEEP'S *KOTIGOBBA 3*

PRE-RELEASE EVENT TO BE HELD IN CHITRADURGA

Sudeep

The function is likely to be held on April 20, however, an official confirmation on the date is awaited

A SHARADHAA

WHILE Sudeep fans are eagerly awaiting the release of *Kotigobba 3* slated to hit screens on April 29, the makers of this commercial entertainer are coming up with a mega pre-release event/ audio launch will be held in Chitradurga. A decision about the event and venue was decided at a meeting, held by producer, Surappa Babu and the actor, recently. The team is currently preparing for a gala function. Keeping in mind the Covid situation, the crew is chalking out a plan, wherein the event will be held on April 20. However, an official confirmation on the date is awaited. Meanwhile, the makers are planning to come up with their next single, details of which will be announced in the coming days.

One of the most anticipated films of 2021, the story of *Kotigobba 3* is penned by lead actor Sudeep. It marks the directorial debut of Shiva Karthik. With Madonna Sebastian and Shradhaa Das playing the female leads, the film also has B-town hero Aftab Shivadasani playing an important role. It also sees Tabla Nani, Ravi Shankar, and Rajesh Nataranga as part of the cast. The film also features Ashika Ranganath making a cameo appearance in a special song. Arjun Janya is composing the music for this venture while Shekar Chandru is handling the camera. *Kotigobba 3* is made with a huge budget and is one of the few Kannada films to be filmed in two foreign locations.

Pawan Kumar takes over *Ikkat*

Film directed by Esham and Haseen Khan, stars Nagabhusana and Bhoomi Shetty; film to release under director's home banner

CE FEATURES

PAWAN Kumar Studios is all set to present *Ikkat*. A film made under Rocket Science Entertainment Production, it will now have filmmaker Pawan Kumar of *Lucia* fame taking over the project. Directed by Esham and Haseen Khan, the movie will release under his home banner.

"Happy to present this Kannada Film called - *IKKAT*. It's a genuine laugh riot, made by a bunch of funny people. We will release the trailer soon and I hope all of you will give this movie a lil love and attention, just enough for us to make more of these in the future. #*Ikkat* (sic). An announcement was made by filmmaker Pawan Kumar on his Twitter handle.

This is the second such initiative under taken by Pawan, who had first associated with Raj B Shetty in *Ondu Motteya Kathe*. *Ikkat*, which has been garnering attention with its posters is a light heart comedy entertainer, set during the pandemic. It stars Nagabhushana in the lead and the film marks the debut of television artiste Bhoomi Shetty. "*Ikkat* has good content with clean humour, and like *Ondhu Motteya Kathe*, this was a copy that came to me after they completed shooting. Since I was busy shooting my webseries and acting assignment, my wife watched the film

Pawan Kumar

in the company of my daughter. Both of them felt it was a different experience," he says, adding that it had them in splits. "When I looked into it further, I realised this is a fun-filled film that comes with clean humour that is appropriate for both children and adults. So we decided to take up the film and bring it out in theatres," he says.

Ikkat will now be presented to the censor board, after which the team is hopeful for a May release. However this depends on the other big films lined up for that month. *Ikkat* has Lavith of Rama Rama Re fame handling the cinematography, and music composed by Dossmode. Apart from Nagabhushana and Bhoomi, the film also stars RJ Vikki, Sundar, Anand Ninsam and Naveen Chethana.

A still from *Ikkat*

Happy to present this Kannada Film called - IKKAT. It's a genuine laugh riot, made by a bunch of funny people. We will release the trailer soon and I hope all of you will give this movie a lil love and attention, just enough for us to make more of these in the future. #Ikkat
— Pawan Kumar, director/producer

Ragini Dwivedi signs *Johnny Walker*

The actor will be paired opposite Abhay Veer in a multilingual crime thriller, which marks the directorial debut of Vedhik Veera

CE FEATURES

ACTOR Ragini Dwivedi had recently talked about taking up at least six to eight projects this year. Now, she has already bagged her second film. The actor, who is part of *Karva 3*, will be the face of *Johnny Walker*. This is going to be an action crime thriller in which Ragini will be seen in the role of an investigative officer. Various shades to her role will be explored as she will be paired opposite Abhay Veer.

The latter, who made his debut with *Saniha*, has worked in movies like *Savaal*, along with Prajwal Devaraj. He has also worked in films like *Brahmaputra*, *Raitha Rajya*, *90Hodi Manige Nadi*, and *Hoysala*, and is now set to begin his eighth film.

Vedhik, who brings in his experience of working as an associate with Narthan in *Mufti*, will be making his directorial debut with *Johnny Walker*. An official announcement about the project will be made today on Aanand Audio when the team plans to reveal more details. Interestingly, this will be a multilingual film which will will be out in Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Hindi.

Ragini Dwivedi

Abhay Veer

Rani Mukerji to headline *Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway*

CE FEATURES

RANI Mukerji will headline a new feature film titled *Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway* for Zee Studios and Emmay Entertainment.

Directed by *Mere Dad Ki Maruti*-director Ashima Chibber, the film is touted as an untold story about a journey of a mother's battle against an entire country.

The actor, who turned 42 on Sunday, said that the film is one of the most "significant films" of her career spanning 25 years. "I started my career with *Raja Ki Aayegi Baraat*, which was a woman-centric film, and coincidentally in my 25th year, I'm announcing a film that is also centered around a woman's resolve to fight against all odds and take on a country. *Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway* is a story of true human resilience and it is a film that is dedicated to all the mothers out there. It is truly one of the most amazing scripts that I have read in a long time and I immediately decided to do this special film," she said in a statement.

Rani was last seen on the big screen in the 2019's *Mardaani 2*. She is currently gearing up for the release of *Bunty Aur Babli 2* next month.

Mrs Chatterjee vs Norway is currently in the pre-production stage and is expected to go on floors soon.

Rani Mukherji

A WELL-MADE HISTORICAL DRAMA

MRINAL RAJARAM

THE Courier makes a strong fist of telling a crucial tale of espionage based on historical events. Set against the backdrop of the Cold War, the film employs an effective storytelling technique that accentuates the imminent threat of nuclear conflict between the Soviets and Americans. What renders the narrative all the more interesting is the build-up of tension.

This tension becomes increasingly palpable owing to the fact that the larger goings-on — Khrushchev's deployment of nuclear warheads in Cuba, the US on high alert for an immediate counter strike, and so on — are never really shown. Yes, they are addressed through dialogue (what could likely happen, what is already happening) by various cogs in the machine that constitute the central characters, but the events themselves remain behind the curtain for the most part. Aside from stray snippets of Kennedy on TV, Khrushchev addressing the members of his political bureau, and a spy plane taking photographs of a nuclear site, little is seen. By focusing on the 'what if they go to war' line through mock business trips, clandestine conversations, and the exchange of top-secret military information, Cooke presents the looming cloud of conflict as an unpredictable unknown to be feared.

Benedict Cumberbatch and Merab Ninidze put in fine performances as English businessman Greville Wynne and high-ranking Soviet official Col Oleg Penkovsky. And to see both characters (especially the latter, who has a lot more to lose) take serious risks, in a desperate attempt to avert a catastrophic nuclear exchange, is nerve-wracking, to say the least. For all intents and purposes, the two men are at different ends of the spectrum — one, an unsuspecting Western businessman being manipulated by MI6 to be a conduit for vital intelligence from the Soviet Union; the other, a high-ranking communist party official ready to put his life on the line to avert an impending nuclear war – and yet, both stand firmly on the side peace.

While Rachel Brosnahan (CIA agent Emily Donovan, sent to assist MI6 in the operation involving Wynne) isn't as convincing as she ought to have been, Jessie Buckley (Sheila, Wynne's wife) shines in her supporting role. Despite Wynne's many attempts at hiding his real reasons for visiting the Soviet Union so often, she sees through his deception. But what exactly he's up to, she cannot tell. She does suspect him of having an affair but isn't entirely sure of it. She confides to a friend about his energy being different whenever he returns from Russia. The subtle cues she picks up on (as only an intimate partner would) are enacted so believably by Buckley, that you are given a window into their slowly crumbling marriage.

Though it has many things going for it (the pacing, the writing, the acting), there are a few instances that have me unconvinced. Foremost of these is an early scene when two agents from MI6 and the CIA (the former in the guise of a Ministry of Trade official) meet Wynne. Wynne suspects the meeting to be about business as usual, but when their true intentions for him are revealed, he buys into their scheming too quickly. Two minutes of incredulity ("I'm not a spy", "What if I get caught?") even from a top-class Cumberbatch isn't enough to save the day. While it is a witty sequence, with subtle barbs being traded from both sides, it seems rather unlikely that the real meeting between these parties was as easy or smooth. Convincing someone with no prior experience of espionage to take up the riskiest assignment of his life, by saying things like, "Wouldn't you want to avert war?", "You'd be doing us a big favour", just doesn't cut it. The film also suffers from the western gaze, as the agenda of the British and the Americans (self-anointed custodians of the supposed free world) comes off as 'oh so superior'. The treatment of its average Soviet citizen/official is borne of prejudice, reducing everyone to unfeeling, cold, and judgemental caricatures.

The moments that stay with you are the ones between Wynne and Penkovsky. The latter introduces the Englishman to the Russian ballet, while he, in turn, takes his Soviet counterpart on a tour of the London pub experience. After years of capture, they are finally brought face to face. Broken in mind, body and spirit, and yet, they have managed to stay loyal to one another. An emotionally charged part of this extended scene gets to you. Wynne yells, "They withdrew the missiles from Cuba! It was because of you! It was because of you!", even as Penkovsky is dragged away, never to be heard from again. Their friendship is what makes *The Courier* as much a deeply human story as one of high historical significance.

RATING 3/5

THE COURIER
Cast: Benedict Cumberbatch, Merab Ninidze, Rachel Brosnahan, Jessie Buckley, Angus Wright
Director: R Dominic Cooke